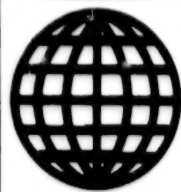


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Near East & South Asia

Near East & South Asia

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Islamists Claim Persecution of Muslim Minorities

92AF0245A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
22 Dec 91 p 17

[Article by Mahmud al-Bayyumi: "Scholars of Islam, Law, History to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: 'Muslim Minorities Have Legitimate Right to Security, Peace'"]

[Text] Cairo—The issue of the world's Muslim minorities continues to hold the attention of the world's Islamic institutions. The goal is to improve the condition of these minorities and provide them with care and protection so that they may live in freedom and peace within the camps where they are located and exercise their legitimate rights without hindrance. Muslim minorities have suffered much persecution; some are even forbidden to occupy leadership positions in their countries or to hold religious services. Muslim sanctuaries have been attacked in various countries of the world. The problem of Muslim minorities continues to be on the agenda of many Islamic conferences, and many recommendations are being issued about it. Makkah is witnessing the convening of the first conference on these minorities at the invitation of King Fahd Bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT met with a number of scholars of Islam, law, and history to discuss the right of Muslim minorities to live in security and peace.

Freedom of Belief

Dr. Jamal-al-Din Mahmud, professor at Imam Muhammad Bin-Sa'ud Islamic University and former general secretary of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Cairo, said:

"The experience of Muslim minorities in many countries of the world proves that Muslims are being coerced or compelled to abandon their Islamic faith, or are being forced to practice their religious rites in secret, for fear of persecution by the societies in which they live. This state of affairs affects not only minorities, but even Muslim majorities in some countries. For example, Albanian Muslims lived for a considerable time hiding their religion and practicing it in complete secrecy. Muslims were even forced to break the Ramadan fast, because worship was a crime in that society. We have heard this from Muslim leaders in these countries. Muslim minorities in some countries have suffered numerous violations and repeated attacks on Muslims' rights and freedoms, and their Islamic sanctuaries have been defiled."

Dr. Jamal-al-Din Mahmud added: "The problem of Muslim minorities has certainly received great interest from officials in countries of the Arab and Islamic world. Discussions between these countries and the countries in which Muslim minorities live have included the problems and conditions of Muslims in these countries. Energetic Islamic diplomacy has achieved remarkable progress in this field."

Human Rights as Propaganda Concept

Dr. Jamal-al-Din Mahmud thinks that the problems of Muslim minorities are not a single problem. "This can be attributed to the difference in how they are treated. Some countries recognize human rights and therefore recognize the right of Muslim minorities, providing them with a reasonable and acceptable amount of freedom, such as freedom of worship and belief. Other countries consider human rights merely a slogan to raise, but not implement. Muslim minorities in these countries suffer different kinds of persecution. We have seen a country force Muslims to change their names—even the names of their dead. The country thereby injures and punishes Muslims merely because they belong to a specific religious faith, that of Islam."

Political Problem

Dr. Jamal-al-Din added: "The fact is, the problem of the world's Muslim minorities is primarily a political problem with a religious covering. The Islamic world has the duty to do all it can to protect Muslim minorities and raise their issue in international meetings, and through discussions between countries of the Islamic world and those that harbor minorities. The Islamic world must also give material and moral assistance to improve the lot of these Muslim minorities, which are a natural extension of Islamic society."

Minority Protection Agreements

Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam, professor of law at al-Azhar University and director of al-Azhar University's Economic Studies Center, said: "The overall task of a diplomat is to represent peoples and carry the ideas and beliefs of his society to the society to which he is sent. However, the basic goal of an Islamic diplomat is to summon [others] to God and to set forth the truths of Islam. Islamic political representation essentially means carrying the mind of Muslims to all societies and defending the Islamic faith against any distortion or misrepresentation. Thus, Islamic diplomacy must take its goals from the goals of Islam."

He added: "As you know, the Islamic countries have diplomatic representation in all parts of the world, and this representation has great influence in various political, economic, and humanitarian fields. Islamic diplomacy must realize that one of its tasks is to defend the rights of Muslim minorities. That is why the Islamic world, as a whole, has a political presence in every world capital. If a Muslim minority suffers any kind of persecution, it will find a political bulwark that will defend its rights, stand behind it, and remove the injustice that it encounters in some societies."

Our Rights, Their Rights

Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam added: "If we move from the problem of Muslim minorities to the problem of religious minorities in general, we find that this issue was raised against the Islamic state. Many wars occurred

because of it, the best-known being the crusades, which took place under the slogan of protecting Christian minorities. Because we are in an age that does not allow the use of force to solve such problems, Islamic diplomacy is in the forefront of solutions present in the world arena to deal with the problems of Muslim minorities." Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam continued: "Over the course of history, we have seen a number of international agreements known as 'minority protection agreements.' There is also international supervision of the condition of religious minorities. King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, has called for a study of the conditions of Muslim minorities in the world and the establishment of the necessary arrangements to deal with their problems peacefully."

Islam Guards Minority Rights

Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam stated: "The rights of religious minorities have been fully guarded in Islam from the beginning to the present day. The world has never heard of attacks on Christian churches or the places of worship of followers of other religions living within Islamic societies, at a time when Muslims are suffering the destruction, or threatened destruction, of their places of worship and attacks on their lives and property. Muslims are being isolated from the communities in which they live, or they are being provided with a living at the lowest level of sustenance known to mankind. Islam is essentially a world-wide call against discrimination between people on account of religion, color, or race. Human rights in Islam are implemented in accordance with the righteous, divine path contained in the Koran. In spite of this, we hear people say that human rights in Islam cannot be valid as universal, world-wide rights."

He continued: "Besides the rights of religious minorities found in Islam, legal principles governing this issue can be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Agreement on Civil and Political Rights, and the Agreement on Economic and Social Rights. All the principles contained in these documents focus on prohibiting discrimination between people because of race, color, or religion. Whatever basis one takes for these principles, they are translated into reality in matters affecting religious minorities through equality between the minorities and the country's masters in regard to the exercise of all legitimate rights. On these principles, any state that does not treat religious minorities well and in accordance with international law must be called to account."

Muslim Sanctuaries

Dr. Muhammad 'Ali al-Jawzu, the mufti of Jabal Lubnan [Mt. Lebanon], spoke about Muslim sanctuaries and how they could be protected and not attacked. He said: "All religious sanctuaries must be protected in accordance with international law, because an attack on them is an attack on the entire religion into whose doctrine these sanctuaries enter. The Islamic religious sanctuaries most subject to attack are those located in

Palestine. Although Jerusalem is registered as a historic city with UNESCO and has inviolable international protection, we find many violations directed against it. These violations are counter to firmly-established conditions. The international community must condemn them and not allow the Zionist entity to practice them."

He added: "Once we realize that Israel wants to annex and Judaize Jerusalem, we shall understand why Israeli authorities have stolen the deeds to Islamic trusts and Muslims' property there. The fact is that Israel is trying to implement a Greater Jerusalem project. The oldest and largest Christian churches in Jerusalem and the world have likewise been subjected to attack and repeated Israeli thefts."

"Thus we see that international Zionism does not respect human rights in general. But Israel's attacks on Muslim sanctuaries are even more ruthless. Israel is planning to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Their landmarks would be obliterated, and Solomon's temple would be built on their ruins."

Dr. Muhammad 'Ali al-Jawzu added: "In India, we see repeated attacks on Muslim sanctuaries. There are attempts to destroy the Mosque of al-Babri in the state of Uttar Pradesh and erect a Hindu temple on its ruins. The Hindus pay no attention to judicial rulings in favor of the Muslims. Authorities in some countries have forbidden Muslims to hold religious services or give the call to prayer. They have destroyed mosques or turned them into warehouses and museums as part of the violation of the sacredness of Islamic sanctuaries."

How Shall We Protect Sanctuaries?

About how to protect Islamic sanctuaries from repeated attacks, he said: "Islamic sanctuaries have a large role to play in preserving the Islamic heritage in many countries of the world. Countries that have preserved Muslim sanctuaries have gained greatly and have profited by attracting tourism to view the landmarks of Islamic civilization. The survival of these sanctuaries is living witness to a state's protection of the things that its Muslims hold sacred and its providing of care to Muslim minorities. The Arab and Islamic countries have a duty to play a large positive role in this field because of the solidarity of the Islamic world."

Preserving Islamic Identity

Dr. al-Jawzu said: "I praise the role of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, because he is giving utmost attention to maintaining these holy places in various countries of the world. The Committee To Preserve the Islamic Heritage is also fulfilling this role with support from the custodian of the two holy mosques, who has dedicated his effort to preserving the Islamic identity of both Islamic sanctuaries and of Muslim minorities."

Islamic History

Dr. Sa'id 'Abd-al-Fattah 'Ashur, general secretary of the Union of Arab Historians, stated that the course of the Islamic tide across various historical periods was "the fruition of the militant effort of our Muslim forefathers, who worked make the call of Islam reach all parts of the earth. They left us numerous Islamic monuments and sanctuaries that still stand today as witness to the greatness of the Islamic militant effort in spreading the Islamic call."

He added: "The Muslim minorities scattered across the world's human map attest to the efforts of Islamic preachers in spreading Islam's call to every place. From the historical aspect, the Muslim minorities are a historical and geographical reflection of the Islamic tide. The distribution of these minorities in many parts of the world is part of Islamic geography. The devotion of these Muslim minorities to their Islamic faith through various periods of history is a true reflection of the continuity of the links of Islamic history. Today, one sees Muslim minorities in countries that the Islamic conquests never reached, but that have been reached by the contemporary call to Islam. The call to Islam was not just the duty and task of our forefathers in their ancient travels and deeds, but is an everlasting, perpetual, and perennial mission for the contemporary and future stages of history."

Attempt to Kill Islamic Belief

Dr. 'Ashur thinks that the persecution of Muslim minorities in some countries of the world and the harassment of Muslims in these societies regarding the practice of their religious rights is an intentional attempt to kill the Islamic faith in these societies. "But historical experiences through various ages have proved that Muslims cling more closely to their beliefs in the face of all kinds of persecution, just as Bilal did, relishing their suffering, and not forsaking their Islam. One thus confronts persecution by bearing the cruelest kinds of persecution. This is a form of intentional challenge in confronting difficulties."

He added: "Another historical constant is that, although Muslim minorities have suffered persecution for their faith in societies hostile to Islam and therefore hostile to Muslims, Islam and Muslims nevertheless survived. Indeed, you find that their numbers, according to the latest statistics, are increasing. Islamic history records the effort of these minorities to preserve their religious identity."

"The elements of the persecution of Muslim minorities began at the time of the decline and breakup of the Islamic empire, and in some societies the problem of this suffering is still continuing. Muslim children, for example, first are deprived of their rights to education, work, and a prosperous life, then they are shunned and isolated from the society in which they live. As circles of enlightenment and communication between Muslim minorities and majorities have widened, hidden, hitherto-unknown facts about the life of the members of

these minorities have appeared. By virtue of the interweaving of Muslim minorities and Muslim majorities into one fabric—the Islamic faith—historical necessities mandate that the majorities help the minorities obtain all their rights that were forcefully wrested from them."

He added: "There need be no delay in fostering the cause of Muslim minorities, for there are many means to bring about this end. First, most Muslim societies have gained freedom and control their own affairs. They also possess economic means, part of which must be directed to support the educational and cultural projects of these Muslim minorities. I do not think that this would be an embarrassment for the Islamic community; the real embarrassment lies in neglecting the right of these minorities to live their lives in security and peace."

Strength and Weakness

Dr. 'Abd-al-Sabur Marzuq, general secretary of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Cairo, believes that the Islamic community must experience the problems of Muslim minorities and extend to them the hand of material and moral assistance. "This was translated into action by the call of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, when he organized an international conference to discuss the problems of Muslim minorities. Muslims who are lazy about praying at the prescribed times must realize that they have brothers in Islam who want to perform these prayers but are deprived of this legitimate right acknowledged in all beliefs, customs, and international systems, by certain circumstances in the countries where they live."

"When Muslim students in countries with [Muslim] majorities go to their schools or institutes, they should realize that their Muslim brothers in Muslim minorities are deprived of their right unless they change their beliefs. If they realize this, they will sense all the problems facing our brothers who live as Islamic minorities in various countries of the world."

Preaching and Minorities

Dr. Marzuq added: "Preachers rarely speak about the problems facing Muslim minorities so that Muslims everywhere will learn about them. However—praise be to God—Islamic institutions have recently performed this role through their information media. The result has been a reaction in Islamic public opinion toward interest in the problems of Muslim minorities. A similar movement to take an interest in their affairs began some years ago. There has been unification of the preaching agencies to work among them and coordination between Islamic relief agencies, so that these people will not be left to hostile organizations that kill their faith and prey on them."

Islamic Public Opinion

Dr. Marzuq added: "Thus, an Islamic public opinion has formed, emphasizing the need to improve the lot of these minorities and work for their development materially, socially, and educationally. The idea has also emerged of supporting their educational institutions; sending caravans of preachers to inform them about their religion in a conscious international Islamic movement; and hosting their students and enrolling them in the schools, institutions, and colleges of the Arab and Islamic world. Today, in our educational institutions we see students from various parts of the Islamic world and from countries with Islamic minorities. Mutual linkage has thus come about between the minorities and the majorities. The minorities' problems have come to occupy a large space in the concerns of officials in the Islamic world in various areas—political, economic, educational, and informational. This has led to blending in the eternal melting-pot of Islam."

Failed Attempts

Dr. 'Abd-al-Sabur Marzuq added: "No one denies the right of minorities to live in security and peace within their societies, but there are those who infringe and thwart these rights. Communism wanted to melt Islam in the crucible of communism, but it failed; indeed, communism itself failed on its own grounds, while Islam and the Muslims survived. Buddhism, Hinduism, and Crusaderism are making similar futile attempts. We expect many kinds of persecution against Muslim minorities, but despite this, the Muslim minorities are growing. There is no doubt that these ideologies are wrong. Indian Muslims are working to develop their society, and the same is true of the other minorities."

Dr. 'Abd-al-Sabur concluded: "Isn't what happened in the Soviet Union enough for those who continue to attack the rights of Muslims? There, the minorities lived through the suffering of persecution, expulsion, and forced emigration, yet today they are returning to the bosom of their Islamic community as strong entities unsubdued by coercion, undefeated by exile, and not separated from the circle of Islam by all the forces pulling them in every direction."

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Summit in Kuwait Discussed by GCC Head

92AE0135A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
91 p 3

[Interview with GCC Secretary General 'Abdallah Bisharah by 'Uthman Al-'Amir and Hasin al-Banyan; place and date not given]

[Text] As attention is focusing on the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] summit in Kuwait, which is exceptionally important because of what has happened in the area and what is currently taking place in the world, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT had an interview with GCC Secretary General 'Abdallah Bisharah, organizer of the Gulf summits.

The dialogue dealt with summit topics and the results hoped to be achieved in terms of stimulating Gulf activity in the various fields. It also sought answers to the questions being raised in the political, security, and economic fields.

Bisharah said that the Kuwait summit will be the summit of "brotherhood and loyalty." He pointed to the basics of Gulf action and the lessons learned from the calamity of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwaiti territory. He stressed the need to intensify cooperation and to remove obstacles, and underlined the importance of regional understanding in consolidating security and stability, especially in light of fast-breaking developments in the international arena.

The following is text of the interview:

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is the slogan of the Gulf summit in Kuwait?

[Bisharah] It will be the summit of "brotherhood and loyalty." We want to strengthen the ties of brotherhood through what we learned from the crisis and the disaster that occurred as a result of the occupation of Kuwait, and from the spontaneous and natural sympathy that the Gulf people have shown in the face of this catastrophe. Kuwait, with all its institutions, headed by His Highness Shaykh Jabir, wants to express loyalty. Hence, we called it the summit of "brotherhood and loyalty." The suggestion that the summit should meet under this slogan came from Kuwait itself. Preparations for this summit have been carried out in this spirit. In Kuwait, the people want to celebrate; they are also anxious to see results. The Kuwaitis have prepared themselves well and have provided all the resources for the summit to succeed. In my view, its outcome will be based on three facts:

- the spontaneous and instinctive sense of unity that deepened during the occupation crisis, and the disappearance of barriers during the calamity;
- Kuwait's view, in particular, is that the Gulf strategic dimension is a basic security constant;

- the guidelines that will come from the summit chairmanship, which this time will be Kuwait.

For this reason, we hope that the Kuwaiti summit will carry us toward greater and wider fields of decision-making and results. What the Gulf citizen wants is reassurance, stability, togetherness, unity, and brotherhood. Reassurance is security. At the Kuwait summit we will deal with this concept, the concept of security based on the constant and clear facts that self-assurance and self-reliance come only from one's self. The old idea that dangers can never come from neighbors is unrealistic and unreal. We must act according to our interests. Domestic public opinion and the institutions should be in harmony with those interests. The leadership should be the guide and the defender of those interests. It must be understood in the matter of security that the GCC states are facing problems at this stage. The number-one problem is that we cannot achieve security in one year, although the elements of self-reliance have been quickly provided. This is one of the reasons and obstacles in the problem. The second problem is that the GCC states want to take into consideration the fact that, whatever they may try to do in the next few years, the sources of danger are greater than their capabilities, because the Iraqi regime will continue to constitute a basic danger and the regional order will be threatened. The order will even be deficient, and joint Arab action will remain suspended as long as the Iraqi regime is in the Arab League and within the Arab framework. So the Kuwait summit will face this problem, which it should deal with clearly and in light of the facts of life. The GCC citizen is looking forward to broadening the march and removing all the obstacles. He also wants decisions consistent with his resolve, determination, and readiness. This should be discussed at Kuwait summit and be taken into consideration in the resolutions on economic issues; in other words, freedom of movement, of ownership, and of exercise of rights and duties.

The third point is that security and prosperity cannot come about without regional understanding. Therefore, this matter must be objectively discussed with Iran because the Iranians are partners in the Gulf waters. There is a difference between dealing with Iran in the Gulf waters and the sovereignty and security of the GCC countries. This is the concern of the Gulf countries and nobody has anything to do with it. The Gulf countries and the GCC countries are free to choose the means that secure their independence, sovereignty, and prosperity. With regard to the sea, the waterways, the fish, and the environment, this must involve cooperation with Iran, because cooperating with Iran is a basic matter in continuing the siege of Iraq from the south so that the present regime will vanish.

These are the three basic challenges facing the Kuwait summit. We rely on what the Gulf press writes, particularly AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper, which we consider to be one of the principal channels propagating public opinion and reflecting the hardships, hopes,

views, and expectations. We are very interested in seeing AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT not only attending, but also interacting and influencing.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The crisis between Qatar and Bahrain has cast its shadow on Gulf joint action. Will this crisis be this year's crisis in Kuwait summit?

[Bisharah] No, this year is going to be the year of security and security concerns, as well as dealing with the reality following the crime and the disaster that have occurred. This will be the main topic at the summit debate. This is because the question being asked is: How can we deal with the Iraqi regime and with the regional and Arab problems, with the question of achieving security, with international developments, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the situation in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. All these problems did not exist last year. This is going to be the focus of discussion. How can we preserve our security and interests, and how can we prove to the world that we are countries with interests of their own? This what I have always insisted upon during seminars, lectures, and interviews—that we are countries and we have interests that sometimes agree and other times disagree. We have our own status and our distinctive position on the world's strategic order. We produce 55 percent of the world's oil needs and have 60 percent of the world's energy reserve. This puts us in a distinguished position and gives us a responsibility—the responsibility of dealing with this reality rationally and reasonably. The world appreciates our responsibility and expects us to preserve our countries and interests. We must act according to this concept. We must bring up issues that the world can understand now. We cannot raise ancient slogans. Let us take as an example what happened in DAKKAR during the Islamic summit. Arab rationality and dealing with Arab reality prevailed. The Arab decision is now in the hands of the influential group of Arab countries, namely the Gulf countries, Egypt, and Syria. This decision is based on reason and on dealing with facts of life. This is considered a major development in inter-Arab relations.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] In what manner will the summit deal with the demands put forward by the Gulf intelligentsia at their conference in al-Shariqah?

[Bisharah] Anything we receive from the popular groups is always conveyed to the leaders. This was what happened in Doha last year, when demands were received from several bodies. One of these was the Kuwaiti Popular Groupings, which was then present in Doha at the summit preparatory conference. We have put them before the summit, which got acquainted with the petitions. All the petitions expressed hopes, wishes, desires, and aspirations. Something similar will take place at the Kuwait summit. A kind of an appeal will be made for listening to these wishes and desires.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you interpret these demands? Do you see them as voicing the intelligentsia's and the elite's feelings that Gulf action through the GCC is slow?

[Bisharah] Frankly, I believe that many of these demands are legitimate, such as speeding up the removal of barriers and deepening and strengthening the Gulf march. They all agree with GCC objectives—that we should have a strong and dynamic policy or a dynamic political will to deal with these barriers and obstacles urgently.

As for the loud and unrealistic howling, which is like screams in the desert, they are out of step with reality, and we pay no attention to them. Frankly, in the Gulf we must be realistic and aware of the nature and characteristic of this area. It is an area that is seeking development and striving to realize its ambitions through development. In this area, the leader does not make decisions that create anxiety for the people; this area is not used to such a thing. Decisions made in this area are progressive and acceptable; they create an appropriate climate and a relaxed atmosphere. This is the nature of our area, which we must understand and realize. Decision-making by the leadership, as once was the fashion in Nicaragua and as some would imagine is the case, is nonexistent. Therefore, we must concentrate on what is acceptable and realistic. We cannot discuss with the leaders unrealistic things, dramatic and melodramatic things. We cannot do that.

Also, it is wrong to imagine that the Gulf area squanders money. This is not true; it is a rejected idea. We in the Gulf do not see ourselves as having the ambitions of the royal courts of the past century. We have nobody who wears a gold crown or has diamond gems in his pocket and doles them out. This is not true. Presumptuousness at certain meetings is unacceptable. We must realize that things put to us in a courteous and polite manner will be looked into and examined critically. With regard to matters that are raised angrily and excessively, they will not.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] A question is being raised regarding your future. Will you quit the GCC Secretariat, given that the UN and the Arab League general secretaries have been replaced?

[Bisharah] In other words, you want me to go! Don't forget that the matter is now in the leaders' hands. I can say nothing about this matter; it is up to the leaders. As long as it is believed that this how matters should proceed, then let it be. I am not disturbed if another person is appointed. It is all up to the leaders.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It is being said that you are the reason for Gulf action lagging behind.

[Bisharah] It is also being said that I am one of the reasons for the preservation of the march. Certainly, I do not accept such sensational allegations. I must maintain the process, which should go forward with conviction and persuasion, and not through pressure, contradiction, and confusion. The process should be carried out through evolutionary and step-by-step consensus. Had we followed a different course, we would certainly have not been where we are now. This is my viewpoint.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some people believe that the Gulf area is now in need of political, rather than military, arrangements.

[Bisharah] I believe that this idea is acceptable if it is part of strengthening the march. Every country has its own views. The GCC is distinguished by the fact that it is a sound consultative body, through which ideas and views are exchanged between countries and leaders in a constructive manner. It benefits from the experience of each country. When you look at the Third World, you will find that the GCC countries represent one of the healthy oases. The reason is that they have built and developed. They did not get involved in dramatic situations. They did not adopt sensational and tempestuous decisions. For this reason, you can see that they have built, developed, and created institutions, while other countries richer than the GCC countries did not progress. On the contrary, they regressed. Why? Because they adopted adventurous decisions that are not based on their countries' ability to implement them. Take Iraq, for example. What has Iraq done since 1958 and up to this day? What the other countries did? All this is to the credit of the GCC countries and not against them.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How did you resolve the dispute over the "Damascus Declaration" and Iran's insistence on being involved in security arrangements in the area?

[Bisharah] This matter will be discussed at the summit. It is a sensitive subject. The "Damascus Declaration" says that every GCC country is free to make the security arrangements which it deems fit. This means that they can seek the help of an Egyptian or Syrian presence on their territories within bilateral arrangements.

This is based on the fact that security and stability requirements should be provided by the GCC countries with the participation of brothers or friends.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Does this mean that the Iranians will have a role in security arrangements in the area?

[BISHARAH] No, this role is for the GCC, but there will be a role for the Iranians with regard to the sea. We must differentiate between the Gulf waters and the independence of the Gulf countries and their sovereignty over the sea. Iran's involvement is confined to the sea and freedom of navigation routes, because Iran is a basic partner in the Gulf waters, and both sides have a desire to develop relations.

GCC Spends 14 Billion Dollars on Air Fleet

92AE0154A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
21 Dec 91 p 9

[Text] After the Gulf crisis, the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] states began to implement huge projects that could cost up to \$14 billion (not counting reconstruction

projects in Kuwait) to develop their sea ports and airports and to bolster their national airline fleets.

The development programs that are currently being implemented, or those that are still in the planning stage, include costs that vary between \$5 billion and 10 billion to buy new planes, more than \$1 billion to expand the ports, and \$3 billion to buy new ships and oil and gas tankers.

The orders for planes constitute one of the largest expenditure items in the transportation sector in the Gulf region, and the three largest airplane manufacturing companies (Boeing, Airbus, and McDonnell Douglas) entered a large-scale battle to win contracts to renew and expand the fleets of the national airlines in the region.

Civil aviation industry sources expect that Saudi Airlines [Saudia] will order 45 new planes in the next few years, within the context of its plan to develop its huge air fleet, which now has 104 planes. As for Gulf Air, it recently bought 12 Boeing 767-300 airplanes, and ordered six more planes of the same model, which are slated to be delivered in 1992. Gulf Air also ordered 12 Airbus A320s.

As for Emirates Airlines, which began activity in 1985, it ordered 14 Boeing 777s, valued at \$1 billion, two days ago [19 December]. Seven of them are slated to be delivered in 1996 and 1997, with the right to purchase seven more from 1997 to 2000.

Emirates Airlines has financed 25 percent of the deal on its own, while it financed the rest through loans from international banks. This deal will allow it to open new routes to Australia, Japan, Korea and the United States, keeping in mind that in the past two years it had bought, or contracted to buy, about 13 Airbus planes. As for Kuwait Airlines, which lost many of its planes because of the Iraqi invasion, it has ordered 24 Airbus planes in a deal valued at several billion dollars.

Airport Development

The GCC states are now witnessing healthy competition between the ports and the airports to provide the most jobs. Thus, the civil aviation authorities in Dubayy, Abu Dhabi, and Bahrain are offering many incentives to attract business, tourist, and the airline company passengers. These incentives vary from competitively priced goods in the airport duty-free shops, to low landing and ground service fees for planes.

Officials in the three airports expect to attract 25 million passengers per year by the end of this decade. In the Bahrain airport, the first stage of the airport expansion project is nearing completion at a cost of \$80 million, and it is expected that when the expansion project is completed, the airport will absorb 10 million passengers.

The Dubayy airport is also currently witnessing expansion projects that will raise its capacity from the current 5 million passengers to 10 million by the end of the expansion project.

Muhi-al-Din Ibn-Hindi, the general director of the Civil Aviation Administration in Dubayy, said the American Bechtel Corporation had made a study of building a new airport at a cost of \$500 million, and he described the project as coming within the framework of "meeting future challenges." The current Dubayy airport is used by more than 50 airlines, which depart from it for more than 100 destinations.

Observers attribute the success of the Bahrain and Dubayy airports to the open-skies policy, which encourages many of the airlines to use these two airports as their transit centers. Thus, the Dubayy and Bahrain airports are considered among the principle hubs through which transit airplanes pass on the way to Africa and Southeast Asia.

With respect to freight activity, Dubayy alone surpasses rest of the cities in the region, taking 10 percent of international air and sea freight activity in this sector.

Last summer Dubayy completed its "freight village" project in its airport, at a cost of \$75 million, enhancing its competitiveness in this field. It was helped by its openness to the outside world and its flexible facilities. After the merger of the Jabal 'Ali and the Rashid port authorities was announced, it became one of the largest ports in the world.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Labor Union Leader on Worker's Status

92AE0155A Jerusalem AL-'USBUL AL-JADID in Arabic
15 Dec 91 pp 29-31

[Interview with Shahir Sa'd, general secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions in the West Bank, by Salah Hajj Yahya; place and date not given]

[Text] In the following interview, the General Secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions in the West Bank, Shahir Sa'd, clarifies the following: the concerns of Palestinian workers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; their working conditions; the drop in the number of Palestinians working in Israel in the past four years due to the reduction in work permits Israel grants to Palestinian workers for work in Israel; the limited extent to which factories and workshops in the territories can absorb Palestinian workers; the spread of unemployment in Palestinian society; and other matters related to the current political process.

[Yahya] What is the size of the Palestinian labor force in the West Bank and Gaza Strip? How many Palestinians work in Israel? How many worked in Israel before the intifadah? How many have worked in Israel during the intifadah?

[Sa'd] Before the intifadah, in 1987, there were an estimated 550,000 workers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of whom about 135,000 were working in Israel. During the intifadah, this number has fluctuated between 100,000 and 110,000. It dropped to 80,000 following the incidents at the site of the Haram al-Sharif [al-Aqsa Mosque] in Jerusalem.

During the Gulf war, specifically from 1 January 1991 to 1 April 1991, no Palestinian worker went to work in Israel.

According to the latest statistics available to us, about 55,000 to 60,000 Palestinians now work in Israel. The Civil Administration has issued them special work permits. Initially, these permits were valid for a week. Now, they are valid for a month and must be renewed at the start of each month at the Civil Administration.

Since the start of the occupation, Israel has focused on Palestinian labor. It has compelled it to work in Israel by offering it better wages than those offered in the occupied territories. Israel has thus been able to control the Palestinian infrastructure.

I myself was compelled, for this reason, to work in Israel at the time. I worked at the 'Asis Company, the Crystal Soft Drink company, and in construction.

Thousands of residents went to work in Israel because of the economic conditions and critical circumstances in the occupied territories, and the lack of training centers for workers.

Since the occupation began, the Israelis have controlled the Palestinian economy through a policy that focuses on [exploiting] manpower from the occupied territories.

Regarding agriculture, Israel has introduced all of its produce into the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israel, unlike the occupied territories, has a sophisticated agricultural system and produces all crops.

[Yahya] How many Palestinians has Israel prohibited from entering Israel to work?

[Sa'd] About 80,000 Palestinian have been prohibited from going to their jobs in Israel. These workers have lost their legal [workmen's] compensation. More than 50,000 have lost their rights conclusively, because they did not obtain permits authorizing them to enter Israel.

[Yahya] What is the role of the Federation of Trade Unions in defending workers' rights?

[Sa'd] I want to stress that we are involved in an ongoing struggle with the authorities, because the Federation of Unions is not permitted to intervene on behalf of Palestinian workers working in Israel. The authorities do not even recognize us. One percent is deducted from the wages of every Palestinian worker as a fee for membership in the Histadrut [Labor Federation], which is supposed to defend his rights. However, the Histadrut does not fulfill its commitment, having never defended the

rights of Palestinian workers. Moreover, Histadrut General Secretary Yisra'el Qaysar, instead of talking about peace, inaugurates a new workers' council in the [Jewish] settlement of Ari'el [in the West Bank].

[Yahya] How many Palestinians work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

[Sa'd] According to the latest estimates, there are about 90,000 workers in the West Bank and about 30,000 in the Gaza Strip. The small number in the Gaza Strip is attributed to the absence of factories or workshops that can absorb a larger number. Because of the high population density and limited amount of land in the Gaza Strip, industry cannot be developed there.

[Yahya] How many factories and workshops exist in the West Bank and Gaza Strip? What do they produce?

[Sa'd] According to the latest statistics, there are about 570 factories in the West Bank and about 180 in the Gaza Strip. These factories produce consumer items, such as food. There are about 180,000 food plants. There are also pharmaceutical factories and stone-producing workshops. The West Bank is famous for producing stone and marble.

However, the West Bank and Gaza Strip lack heavy and high-tech industries, such as electronics factories. There are few workers in national factories, due to the lack of heavy industry to absorb a larger number of workers.

[Yahya] Have new factories or workshops been established during the intifadah? Have the Israeli authorities permitted or prohibited their establishment?

[Sa'd] During the intifadah, dozens of citizens have applied to the Civil Administration to open workshops or factories. The Civil Administration approved the establishment of 30 factories. However, it granted construction permits to only three factories. Everything reported in the media is not true. Many Palestinians are willing to establish factories and workshops, and the personnel to staff them exist. However, the authorities are placing obstacles in their way.

Unemployment

[Yahya] What about unemployment in the occupied territories?

[Sa'd] The Federation of Trade Unions held a conference in Jerusalem on 19-20 September 1991—called "Conference To Counter Unemployment"—to create solutions for the economic situation and the unemployment that is spreading among Palestinians. It emerged from the discussion that if we want to employ 20,000 Palestinian workers, we need about \$750 million over a five-year period. Unemployment in the occupied territories is now estimated at about 35 percent, i.e., 90,000 unemployed workers, which is only a minimum estimate.

[Yahya] Has there been a positive change in the consumption [by Palestinians of the products] of local factories?

[Sa'd] Yes, a Palestinian economic recovery has been noted. The West Bank and Gaza Strip constitute Israel's second largest market, after the United States. I want to stress that the number of Palestinians working in the occupied territories has increased by about 8,500. In addition, citizen's consumption of national goods has increased the production rate.

[Yahya] Will the day come when Palestinian workers will dispense with the need to work in Israel? What is being done by the Federation of Unions and others to make that day a reality?

[Sa'd] Our primary goal is to dispense with the need to work in Israel. We are attempting to develop the Palestinian economy by establishing factories and workshops. However, the federation is very restricted by Israel. Israel comes nowhere near making good on its claim that it is facilitating and encouraging the establishment of factories in the West Bank.

[Yahya] Does the Federation of Trade Unions have relations with different organizations in Israel?

[Sa'd] Yes, the federation has close political relations with leftist movements that support peace with the Palestinian people. They visit us continuously. On the workers' level, we have good relations with the joint Arab-Jewish list under the leadership of trade unionist Binyamin Gonen. They play an active role, especially from a media standpoint. There is also the Worker's Line organization, which does as much as possible to obtain workers' denied rights. We also have good relations with several Arab Knesset members.

[Yahya] What type of relations, if any, does the federation maintain with foreign countries?

[Sa'd] The federation has good relations with all federations in the European and Scandinavian countries, the Canadian Congress, Latin America, Brazil, the Federation of South Africa, the International Confederal Union, the Free Federation in Brussels, and the Federation of Christian Workers. We have participated in numerous international conferences. Our primary role has been to inform. We have highlighted the conditions of the Palestinian people under the yoke of occupation and have explained the Palestinian cause to the world.

Several federations have helped us and given us aid. For example, the Italians have sponsored numerous projects. One of them involved adopting and paying all of the expenses of 4,500 Palestinian children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for two years.

Several international unions are paying for the purchase of equipment for the federation, enabling us to create several projects, such as sewing and other courses. Also, Germany and Italy have contributed a large amount of medical equipment to the federation.

The Workers' Intifadah

[Yahya] What remarks would you like to make as the intifadah in the occupied territories now enters its fifth year?

[Sa'd] The intifadah has imposed a new reality on the international arena. This reality asserts that the Palestinians need a homeland and must be able to exercise their right to self-determination.

[Yahya] Could you comment on the initiatives seen in the region as a result of the Madrid Peace Conference and the current peace process?

[Sa'd] Unfortunately, and I say this quite frankly, the Israeli Government and some Israelis are cancelling out all optimism among Palestinians. How can there be peace as long as the occupation of Arab lands continues?

If anything is to be indicated, it is that Israel is not serious about making peace and giving the Palestinian people its legitimate right.

[Yahya] How do you view the U.S. position on the peace process?!

[Sa'd] The American position is very well known to the Palestinians. They are talking about peace. It is within their power, if they want, to impose their will on most of the parties, with the exception of the Palestinian people. There can be no peace without us being given our right to self-determination. America states that there must be a dialogue. We, the Palestinians, and our organization, the PLO, welcome dialogue and understand the need for it. However, the American position favors Israel. The biggest indication of this bias is that America has not forced Israel to stop its settlement activity. Let us assume that an agreement is reached on three years of autonomy without an end to settlement activity. In that case, there will be a new reality, namely the seizure of the majority of Palestinian land. In the future, when negotiations for a final solution start, the Israelis will maintain that the new status of the lands on which settlements are built must be accepted. That would not be in our interest.

[Yahya] What would you like to say to the Israeli people on this occasion, especially as the peace process gets underway?

[Sa'd] I say to the Israeli people, in my capacity in the Federation of Trade Unions, that 42 percent of the martyrs, wounded, and imprisoned, and those whose houses were destroyed, are hard workers. Therefore, the time has come to make peace between us after this long, bitter struggle.

Our hands are outstretched toward peace, but there will be no peace and stability in the Middle East as long as the Palestinians do not obtain the right to self-determination and establish an independent state.

We and the leftists in Israel have promoted the slogan "two states for two peoples." Let us fight together. Let

our message reach everyone in Israel: Our hands are outstretched toward peace. Help us.

EGYPT**Officials on Country's Role in New World Order**

92AF0220B Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
6 Dec 91 p 40-41

[Article by Najwan 'Abd-al-Latif]

[Text] Where do we stand in relation to the change that has occurred in the world order? This is a question that the Annual Conference of the Alumni of the National Academy of Higher Administration has tried to answer.

Dr. Usamah al-Baz's attendance at the conference was a surprise. Over 30 years, the age of the conference, the association had invited personalities that were either officials or experts in the field of administration and economics, and sometimes departing from tradition, would invite some thinkers and people of authoritative views. This was the first time a political personality was invited.

The second surprise at the conference this year was that Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi attended. Despite the fact that a large number of successive prime ministers participated in many of the association's conferences, Dr. 'Atif Sidqi always declined to attend. This is the first time that he participated in the conference.

Surprises aside, we now look at this year's conference—number 27. Its title is "Axes of Change in Egyptian Society." Its venue was Alexandria; it lasted four days and was attended by 400 chairmen and leaders of the public and private sectors. As Dr. Zakaria Jad, secretary general of the association, said: "Members of the conference truly represent a picture of the production sector in Egypt. In the past, all participants were from the public sector cadres, while today they are a mixture of both sectors."

"This association," Dr. Zakaria Jad said, "believes that the most urgent questions involving the Egyptian state of affairs are those of change. For this reason it adopted the question of change as the focus of its conference last year, this year, and next year. Change is not an absolute term; rather, it is defined within a comprehensive context in light of existing definitions that are not easy to overlook. We need change in order to have greater freedom and to be better able to move and to absorb the views of others, and then achieve progress."

Dr. Usamah 'Abd-al-Wahhab also spoke about the reason for choosing the question of "change" as the topic of the conference. He said: "Our interest in the future is logical. Progress in the world is moving fast and we cannot catch up with it with the production averages we have been accustomed to. Ideological conflicts have come to an end, and international relations are governed by common interests. Technological progress, which has

become the field of conflict and competition in the world, is shifting from one between countries into one between markets. We have no option other than to change the fundamentals of society entirely; not just to change individuals. It should be a change of objectives and methods of action, without ignoring the selection of leadership. The axes of change are political, economic, and social. These are the topics of this conference."

Dr. Usamah al-Baz spoke about the political axis, the new world order, and Egypt's role in it. He spoke on the second day of the peace conference in Madrid.

He said: "We are undergoing a new world order that has not yet crystallized. It is now going through a transitional period with special characteristics. The world is less tense, and competition between nations is no longer violent. The whole world is leaning toward disarmament, not just weapons of mass destruction, but arms of all kinds. There is now fear of an arms build-up in one particular country, as has happened in the case of Iraq. Peoples have suffered because of the large resources the military industry is consuming. A certain country spends 40 percent of its total expenditures on arms."

Dr. al-Baz stressed that Egypt is one of the first countries in the area that demanded the abolition of weapons of mass destruction, "because it is not in our interest to confine ourselves to reactions. Indeed, we should have our own view on this question within the context of national security interest. We are talking about disarming all the states of the area in a balanced manner, without the balance tipping in favor of a particular state."

Speaking about a world changing from a bipolar system into a different, new system, Dr. Usamah al-Baz said: "This system is not unipolar, for which the United States is candidate, as some people would like it to be. The matter is not so simple. It is expected that the system would tend toward multi-polarity. There are many parties that are qualified to occupy a position that is no less important than that of the United States, particularly at the beginning of the next century. These are Western Europe, Japan, China, and the Asian tigers. Even the Soviet Union, after the transitional period through which it is going now, will remain a major military power."

Dr. Usamah al-Baz wondered: "What about the position of the Third World in relation to the new order? The Third World must redefine its policies through certain establishments that organize its political action, such as the Nonaligned Movement, which should redefine its new role. Positive neutrality is no longer of any value under the multi-polar system. Perhaps a more suitable role would be to start the North-South dialogue. The developing countries must also catch up with the train of progress and seek to narrow the gap between them and the developed world, particularly since one of the features of the new system is that defining the strength of a

particular state will be based on its ability to use modern technology and its administrative system."

Speaking about the role of Egypt within the framework of the new world order, Dr. al-Baz said: "Egypt must realize that Egypt, as a model, is far more important than Egypt as a leader. In the next phase, the role of leadership is no longer acceptable, but being an model is its historical role. Many of the political and economic methods we pursue in Egypt are automatically transferred to the circles around us—the Arab world, the African world, and the Islamic world. Egypt has the ability to innovate."

Dr. Usamah al-Baz added: "Also, it is possible that Egypt will play an active foreign political role (in fact, it is already partly playing such a role) directed toward serving domestic policy. I would imagine that it will not be able to play its roles in the area unless it gives priority to economic reform. In this regard, it can play a role in the North-South dialogue and can submit its proposal for balanced disarmament of the countries of the area. It can also benefit from the balances of international relations; avoid involving itself in any conflicts; and instead, work for narrowing conflicts and disputes."

"Egyptian society is not starting from scratch; it has a heritage and a vast cultural credit. Through such credit and understanding of what is happening around us, we will be able to define Egypt's strategic concept at this stage. We can define our national objectives, and the external dangers around us and how to deal with them. This matter is now the subject of consideration by the state."

"I believe that the economic trend is now heading in this direction: a new order, not based on restrictions and prohibitions that would help to boost our ability to compete abroad. The state is alert and aware of this. It helps without restricting the citizens' activities. We realize that the capitalist system is not ideal, but it needs renovation and change. This is what the capitalist thinkers themselves believe. There is also understanding of the people's need for a social and political democracy. This understanding and realization could enable us to chart our role in the new world order."

Dr. Sa'd-al-Din Ibrahim, a political science professor, dealt with the social dimension of the new world order. He said: "We live in this area in the manner of playing in the back alleys of history, fighting our political and economic battles with the ground rules of past eras, without learning from the accumulation of historical experience since Muhammad 'Ali and up to Saddam Husayn. Saddam Husayn was dominating an alley, and suddenly he went out to the main road leading his people by the same logic of the alley, and so he was hit by a car. The leaders that do not understand the spirit of the age end up, together with their peoples, suffering injury and mutilation, and the next generations pay the cost with blood."

Dr. Sa'd-al-Din Ibrahim said: "The role of the state has diminished in the present age, but we still do not

recognize that the rules have changed. Even diminishing the role of the state in Egypt is happening in a disorderly fashion. Consequently, the losses will be great. The state is trying to convince the international institutions that it is complying with their conditions, while in fact, it is only complying with some of them. It is trying to delude society into believing that subsidies are continuing, and so is free education and medical treatment. This also is not true. The state then plays the role of the wise guy, but the society instinctively knows this and, therefore, sooner or later will demand change. Development can be achieved only with human efforts. Man must develop in order to be able to find a solution for his problems. Man in the third revolution is a thinking brain, and not a pair of working hands. In order to get out of the back alley of history, we must begin with education and democracy in order to face the tremendous world changes."

Dr. 'Ali al-Silmi, deputy director of Cairo University, spoke about a new world from an administrative angle. He said: "We are on the threshold of a new era in which society will be based on the production of information, which is the real motivating power for production. Computer technology is the real driving force of this society. The market of this society is the market of knowledge, the social center of gravity for workers in the field of information. While the industrial society depended on specialization and division of labor, the era of information will depend on congregation and integration, and on the democracy of participation. Participation in administration will be intrinsic in the administration's structure. A radical change will take place in administrative concepts and administrative philosophy in the age of electronics and computers, which will depend on extensive organization. The human being is the basic element that generates information, drives the technical revolution, and implements it. Accumulation of knowledge, and not accumulation of capital, will be the basis of progress. It is the means that helps the state in the new order to achieve political freedom and realize high levels of production on the basis of investing human resources on the highest level."

'Isam-al-Din Jalal, president of the National Association for Technological and Economic Development, spoke about technology in a changing world. He said: "There is a crisis in the developing countries, including Egypt, that needs attention. The developing countries are suffering from debts and trade balance deficit. The drop in raw material exports in recent years reached 10 percent annually, while the price and volume of industrial imports is increasing and the developed countries are raising more barriers in the face of imports from developed countries. Investments have been directed to the Far East and the developed countries. This is in addition to the population explosion and great demand for consumer goods in the poor countries."

"The tentacles of change will reach every corner of human life. We are on the verge of change in strategic security, of which the fall of the Baghdad Pact, and the collapse of the Marxist regimes and the shrinking of their

influence in Europe and internationally, are just the beginnings. Characteristics of the new stage are not yet clear. They will become clear only after many years. European Community production will outstrip that of the United States; its GNP will reach \$7 trillion and its share of world trade, 40 percent. The possibility of military and nuclear confrontation between Russia and the United States developing into economic confrontation and competition is expected to put the developing countries under tremendous pressure. This brings up the possibility of curtailing the developing countries' security, political, and economic role, and the chances of free choice and independent development diminishing. Population explosion, and the mounting danger of environment pollution and its effect on the world climate, will turn the danger of poverty and backwardness into a worldwide weapon threatening the major countries more than nuclear weapons. Some 85 percent of the world population lives in developing countries, most of them in cities that are unable to support them. Market forces cannot be depended upon to protect the environment and the global climate."

"The higher administration in Egypt is shouldering impossible burdens. I am stating this view out of sympathy and I am driven by hope, because the responsibilities are heavy and complex. Sources are not available, and scientific and objective programs for drawing up policies and strategies is nonexistent. There is a tremendous need for change and modification."

The prime minister's meeting with members of the conference was held in a new and distinctive method. Instead of Dr. 'Atif Sidqi explaining the policies of his cabinet and their reasons and outcome, he preferred to hear the complaints and views of the participants. He answered them in a clear manner, sometimes by issuing decisions and other times by promising to study these subjects.

Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd presented the alternative to the prime minister's speech by discussing the characteristics of change in Egypt. He said change should not be for the sake of change, but for maintaining control over inflation rates and achieving development at rates higher than the rate of population growth, through an economic reform program.

In his speech, Engineer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab focused on the new business sector law. He stressed that the executive regulations of the law are open to changes and alterations, according to observations made during implementation. The next stage will be to prepare the public sector to deal with the law. It will begin with a comprehensive revision of the public sector's structure so as to be compatible with the idea of self-development.

Iron Works Factory Begins Operation

92AF0239B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 Dec 91 p 11

[Text] Cairo—The Egyptian Company for the Production of Ingot Iron has begun operating the vast ferrosilicon project, which has been established on 50 feddans in Idfu district, east of the Nile in the governorate of Aswan. The project aims to export 80 percent of its output.

The project will produce the ferrosilicon ingots needed for the local and international iron and steel industries. These ingots are added to the steel furnaces in order to improve the steel's electrical and mechanical properties. The ingot is the basis for the production of steel and cast iron.

The project's capacity is 56,000 tons annually, which will meet the needs of local iron and steel factories and enable export to world markets.

A company official said the project will meet with stiff competition in the world markets. For this reason, state-of-the-art technological equipment has been used to produce a high quality product. A unit for purifying furnace gasses has been installed, in order to benefit from those gases later.

The project will develop into an integrated industrial complex of a specialized nature. It will carry out electro-metallurgical treatment of mineral ores inside electrical-reduction furnaces. For this reason, the project has been located near mineral ore extraction and electric power sites.

The project will rely on local raw materials, including quartz ingots that are available in the Egyptian eastern desert, [carbon reduction ores], and additional iron ores.

'Atif Jad, general manager of the company, said the project has been able to produce five high quality ingots. Meanwhile, several tests are being carried out in order to separate nickel from ferrovanadium [vanadoferrite] in order to establish an industrial unit for the production of the final product with a capacity of 100 tons a year, valued in the iron market at 3 million Egyptian pounds.

Officials Defend Sales Tax

92AF0238A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
4 Dec 91 p 21

[Text] The aim of any successful and effective tax system is to achieve two principal objectives: economic development and social justice. Within this framework, the state provides everyone the opportunity to work and to profit and, at the same time, to pay the state and society the tax due to them, taxes being one of the most important sovereign revenues that enable the state to spend and finance the various activities and services.

Over two days, the First Tax Conference discussed the role of taxes in development. The conference was held

under the auspices of Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, and was organized by the Egyptian Tax Association. It was attended by a number of ministers and economic and accounting experts. The conference held six debate sessions, which dealt with more than 27 research papers scientifically discussing the role of taxes with the aim of evaluating the tax system and the laws organizing it, as well as the method of operation. The sessions were characterized by their spirited discussions; they were attended by those responsible for tax, economic, and investment activities, as well as by businessmen. Problems and obstacles were discussed frankly, with the intent of achieving a better tax system.

The sessions that were characterized by divergence of views were probably those that dealt with sales tax and its impact on the development plan. The sessions were chaired by Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq 'Abd-al-Majid, former deputy prime minister and minister of economy. The sales tax was the target of much criticism, on the grounds that it is the main cause of the recession and stagnation from which the Egyptian economy is suffering.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq 'Abd-al-Majid, responding to criticism, said that "the sales tax is, in fact, a tax on production, levied from the producers, although in the final analysis, it is paid by the commodity end-user. The sales tax is an admission that we have not yet arrived at imposing income tax that would lead both to efficiency and justice. If we cannot obtain what is due to the state from the source, then we obtain it from the end-user, so that we can secure the state's dues in full from the source.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq 'Abd-al-Majid said that sales tax is unfair because it was instituted at a time when the state adopted several depressive measures that aimed at reducing inflation. Examples are: increasing the interest rate on savings in Egyptian pound, liberalizing the rate of exchange, setting credit ceilings, increasing prices of public sector commodities, increasing fuel prices, ending subsidies for certain commodities, and other similar measures. This, of course, was accompanied by a recession in the market. As a result, the sales tax has been blamed for being the principal cause of recession, despite the fact that the sales tax is one of the tools to fight recession through receipts from real, non-inflationary resources.

Muhammad Mahmud 'Ali, counselor to the Finance Minister, spoke in defense of the sales tax. He said the time has come to apply it in order to realize a tax system based on the taxpayer willingly paying taxes, by enhancing confidence between the taxpayer and the Tax Department. The implementation of the sales tax is about 10 years late, bearing in mind the exorbitant cost resulting from delaying implementation of the decision.

The Finance Minister counselor added: "The sales tax is not something new; it is an evolution of an earlier tax that, in fact, is already in force, namely, the consumption tax, which has caused many problems. Avoiding these problems was in mind when the new law was enforced.

In order to demonstrate the positiveness of the new law, we must compare the problems that existed under the consumption law, and the present situation with regard to the sales tax. I believe that the comparison will naturally be in favor of the new law, which has eliminated 90 percent of those obstacles."

The Finance Minister counselor pointed out that revenues from the sales tax reached 962 million Egyptian pounds during the period from 1 July to mid September. He said that the sales tax system does not allow tax evasion—not through the use of police methods, but because of the self-control system, i.e., the sales of one merchant represent the purchases of another, and so on.

One of the most important sessions that witnessed a heated debate was the one that dealt with tax exemptions in Egyptian law and their role in economic and social development plans. The research papers submitted to this session discussed tax exemptions, especially those granted under Investment Law No. 230 of 1989, which grants exemptions up to 10 years. Most of the researchers called for the need to trim these exemptions, since they cause a loss of revenues for the treasury, particularly since most of the projects liquidate their businesses following the expiration of the exemption period, and then reemerge in a new form to resume their activities and enjoy new exemptions. The researchers call for reducing the 10-year period or restricting it to some specific investment projects that the state needs for its economic development plan.

Dr. Muhiy-al-Din al-Gharib, chairman of the Investment Authority, replied to these criticisms by explaining that "as we are discussing the exemptions under Investment Law No. 230 of 1989, we must look at them in the context of the international and the regional situation around us. Investment laws in most of the world grant exemptions. We have taken into account the privileges that the other countries grant. Therefore, we should not talk about exemptions without taking note of competition in the international arena."

Dr. al-Gharib highlighted an important point, which is that exemptions are granted to new projects and not to old ones. "The 10-year exemptions are granted to projects in new urban areas as an incentive for the development of these communities. If it were not for tax exemptions for new cities, those cities would not have become what they are today. Ten years ago Madinah 'Ashirah min Ramadan [10 Ramadan City] was a desert, and now it is admired by all who visit this city and its projects."

Dr. Muhiy-al-Din al-Gharib also pointed out the positive aspects of tax exemption. "It is not a question of launching new projects," he said, "but of attracting projects to the new areas, such as the projects in Shubra al-Khaymah, which is witnessing a industrial boom, where exemptions attract new community development. Some people talk about exemptions as if the state is sacrificing real, guaranteed revenues. This is not true.

Exemption is an incentive to attract investors to Egypt. It is a deferred incentive, which is enjoyed by those who scientifically plan the project, implement it precisely, and manage it in a sound economic manner. Several projects have failed, made no profits, and were forced to close up.

"The tax exemption for which the state is making a sacrifice aims at opening job opportunities for young people. Some 500,000 graduates enter the job market every year. This is in addition to the already-unemployed work force. This is the major challenge Egypt is facing today.

"The exemptions contained in the investment laws are not new; they are in Law 159 and in the income tax law. All that happened is that all these exemptions have been combined into one law, and the authorities with which an investor deals have been reduced to one, namely the Investment Authority. The law also grants everyone expansion by increasing a project's capital or capital assets an additional five years. This answers the allegation that every project is liquidated after the expiration of the exemption period. Moreover, the liquidation of production projects incurs heavy losses for anybody making this difficult decision."

Muhammad Fathi 'Abd-al-Baqi, head of the Tax Department, said "the Department fully respects the investment law concerning tax exemptions for projects. But there are certain negative phenomena that investigations by the Tax Department have revealed. For example, some people buy or rent a place in which no activity is taking place, but which contains goods worth 10 million pounds as supplies for projects. The electric power meter in the place shows consumption of only a few kilowatt hours. What shall I do with it?"

The head of the Tax Department pointed to efforts the tax officers exert in order to increase tax receipts. These have jumped from 4 billion pounds to 8 billion pounds in three years. Tax receipts this year are expected to reach 11 billion pounds.

"The department pays attention to big taxpayers, for they are the principal source of receipts; great efforts are being made to categorize them [properly]. After the number of tax collectors was increased, one million new taxpayers were categorized during the past years. With the appointment of new staff, the department is expected to open files for about one million taxpayers, which would lead to increased receipts. The department has expanded by opening new tax commissions and by expanding the geographic system. The new geographic system has been fully implemented in Cairo and will be implemented in Alexandria beginning next December."

Responding to criticism of the Tax Department's method of arbitrary assessment, head of the Tax Department said "the criterion is correctly-kept ledgers and accounts. If a taxpayer does not submit regular returns, the tax officer is compelled to make an estimate via observation of activities. The odd thing is that, after

paying the tax, the taxpayer grumbles, despite the fact that he can appeal to the appeals committees and to the court."

Mustafa Shawqi, chairman of the Egyptian Tax Association, which organized the conference, spoke about the objectives of this conference. He said: "This conference will contribute ideas on ways to deal with our number-one economic problem: the continuing deficit in the state's general budget and how to get rid of it. This can be achieved only by narrowing the gap between revenues and expenditures. When there is an inclination to deal with the deficit by increasing sovereignty revenues and using taxes as a means to do so, we must realize that there is a limit to tax capacity that is difficult to exceed. So, the revenues will remain somewhat static and public expenditure will increase, particularly since figures confirm [what was predicted in] the Egyptian Central Bank's report of 1991. It shows that total deficit in the state general budget increased to 8.2 billion pounds in 1988-1989. This is due to an increase in expenditures, which were estimated at 28.7 billion pounds, and increased to 30.3 billion pounds by the end of the year. This prompts us to call for a firm and serious reduction of the state's general expenditures."

In its recommendations, the conference stressed the need to apply a standardized tax, since it is the most important requirement for the achievement of a balanced tax and social justice.

Article Cites Confusion in Public Sector

92AF0220C Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
6 Dec 91 p 5

[Article by Ghali Muhammad]

[Text] A state of great confusion is prevailing in all the public sector companies these days, particularly those operating in the industrial field, to a degree affecting productivity. The confusion has led to lack of clarity in certain matters, and to making some destructive decisions in these companies.

The first of these problems was the delay in selecting leaders in accordance with the business sector law. This delay has led to instability among the leaderships. The problem has been aggravated by rumors about who will remain and who will be relieved.

Moreover, the present leaders in the holding companies or their affiliates do not yet know who to talk to. Will they talk to the ministers of each sector or to the prime minister, in his capacity as the minister of business sector?

Despite the fact that the ministers of each sector are still managing some of the affairs relating to the companies, nobody knows what to do during the transitional period. This was evident in the question of determining the nature of the general assemblies, which will begin their meetings Wednesday and which will discuss operations

during the final year. Letters went out to chairmen of holding companies, who will chair the affiliate companies' general assemblies' meetings in accordance with the new law, while the meetings will take place in accordance with last year's procedures and according to the old law.

So far, the present leaderships do not know which law to implement to manage work in the companies. There is still ambiguity in the new law that needs to be clarified by the ministers of each sector.

So far, nobody knows the form of the business sector's secretariat, the nature of its work, and who will work in it. Will these be employees from the concerned ministries or from elsewhere?

Last weekend, Prime Minister and Business Sector Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi inspected the new business sector's headquarters on the fifth and sixth floor of the Ministry of Industry building. Nobody knows when the new appointments will be announced, so that stability will be restored. This is because the delay raises questions suggesting that pressures are being exerted in order to select particular leaders or personalities, when the quality of leadership that should manage the business sector in the coming stage is quite clear.

The second serious problem was that the Investment Bank issued a decision suspending financing of all production projects in the business sector companies, including projects now underway. The decision to suspend previously-granted financing exempted the government service sector until receipt of further instructions.

This decision is serious, because it has been applied to projects that are under construction, which means the loss of what has already been spent. This has been a serious blow to the companies. We would understand if this was applied to new projects that haven't started and are waiting for the implementation of the business law, but the fact that this has happened is a serious matter.

The third problem is that five months after the credit ceiling was fixed, companies began to suffer from serious adverse effects. As a result of the drop in targeted production, everybody has been suffering from slow sales. As I have learned, there is no better proof than the drop, by about 40 million Egyptian pounds monthly, in the sales of a major industrial company that produces semi-manufactured goods.

All signs indicate that if the credit ceilings stay where they are, then this will be the real danger.

IRAQ

Barzani: Agreement With Baghdad Possible

92AE0174A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
22 Dec 91 p 5

[Interview With Kurdish Democratic Party Leader Mas'ud Barzani in Iraqi Kurdistan; date not given:

"Barzani: Agreement With Baghdad Is Possible, But Not at Any Price; Statements Made by Dimerel Are, in Our Opinion, Positive; Greater Understanding of Kurdish Issue Provides Greater Opportunity for Understanding Between Kurdish Movement in Iraq and Turkey")

[Text] Iraqi Kurdistan—In an interview given to AL-HAYAH in Northern Iraq, Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) Leader Mas'ud Barzani has said that the objective of the proposal to hold general elections for a national council in Iraqi Kurdistan is to bestow legitimacy on the Kurdistan Front (KF) and to end the militias' rule in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Barzani has emphasized that the elections will be "within the framework of the Republic of Iraq," saying: "We support Iraq's sovereignty and Iraqi national unity." He has also announced that demarcation of the geographic area of Iraqi Kurdistan is the only point on which no agreement has been reached in the negotiations between the KF and the Iraqi Government and that "this point is still pending." Following is the text of the interview:

[AL-HAYAH] The talk in Iraqi Kurdistan these days is predominantly about elections for a national council. Will the council be the decision-maker for the entire Kurdish movement in Iraq and will its decision-making include approval or rejection of a self-rule agreement with Baghdad?

[Barzani] The truth is that I am author of the proposal to hold elections in Kurdistan. I submitted the proposal to the KF leadership nearly two months ago and it was approved in the KF's latest meeting. It has been agreed to form a legal committee to draft an election law by the end of this month.

To tell the truth, the objective is not to have the council as an alternative to the government or to establish an independent administration. There is a crisis in the KF, a decision-making crisis. The KF was created under different circumstances. At the time, we were practically engaged in a guerrilla war. Now, we are facing very big administrative and social problems. In order to have a decision-making center and in order that this center may have legitimacy, we have found it necessary to hold elections so as to bestow legitimacy on the KF and to determine the party, or parties, that will gain the masses' trust.

[AL-HAYAH] This means that the decision on an agreement with Baghdad on self-rule is postponed until the elections are held?

[Barzani] It isn't postponed. But if no agreement is reached by the time the elections are held, then the decision will belong to the council. The elections do, in fact, have another objective, namely to end the militias' rule. The parties will continue to engage in political party activity, but the fighters (Pishmerga) and government must be under the control of a legitimate authority elected by the people.

[AL-HAYAH] Will administrative and municipal agencies be elected at the same time?

[Barzani] This could be done later. The present plan is to elect a national council and to leave the subsequent steps to this council.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you believe that the Kurds are ready for the experiment of exercising democracy?

[Barzani] What is important, or more important, in my opinion is to hold free democratic elections in Kurdistan for the first time and to see the Kurdish citizen exercise, also for the first time, his right to elect his legitimate representatives. I think that the Kurdish citizen is ready and willing, but the process must be organized properly.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you believe that the parties themselves are ready to accept the election outcome with a democratic spirit?

[Barzani] They have to accept. A losing party may not feel comfortable with the outcome, but we must submit to the people's decision.

[AL-HAYAH] Are you confident that the parties will accept the outcome?

[Barzani] They have no other option. If any party refuses to accept the election outcome, it will have to face the people. I don't imagine that any party or individual can stand fast in the face of the people's will.

[AL-HAYAH] What, in your opinion, will the Iraqi Government's reaction be?

[Barzani] I believe that the reaction will be normal, because this process will help us and the government settle numerous disputes and problems and to untie knots now and in the future.

Two-faced Position

[AL-HAYAH] How can you convince Iraqi, regional, and international public opinion that these elections do not surpass the framework of a united Iraq and that they are not a step toward independence or secession?

[Barzani] We hold no two-faced position. We support Iraq's sovereignty and Iraqi national unity. All we do is within the framework of the Republic of Iraq. This is what is beneficial to us at present. As to those who have doubts, we will invite international figures, committees, and organizations to come to Kurdistan to observe the elections. We want them to become certain of our intentions and tendencies.

[AL-HAYAH] The question of your personal position toward what can be characterized as the "international factor" is often raised in the world press and political circles. The majority of opinions confirm that you don't trust international support for the Kurdish issue. Would you explain your viewpoint? It seems that this viewpoint is misunderstood.

[Barzani] I thank you for this question, because I really do notice that this issue is raised in a manner that contrasts with reality. I am not so naive as to ignore the foreign factor, especially since I appreciate, in wake of the major international developments, how important this foreign factor is. But I also believe that the domestic factor is more important. If we are not intrinsically prepared for all eventualities, then the foreign factor will not have major influence. This is how I see the matter: The Kurdish issue is a political issue. All the human problems we are experiencing are a consequence of the failure to develop a political solution to the Kurdish issue. Politically, I don't see that the issue has moved to a very advanced phase abroad. In this particular regard, I demand greater guarantees and assurances than those currently offered. Otherwise, I understand and appreciate the importance of the foreign factor. I thank all those who have advanced humanitarian aid to the Kurdish people during their difficult crisis.

[AL-HAYAH] Within this context, what is your assessment of the current developments in the nearest neighboring country, namely Turkey, whether in connection with what is happening in Turkey or with Turkey's pledges to protect Iraqi Kurds against any "brutal attack," as Turkish Prime Minister [Soleiman Dimerel] has put it, and to support Iraq's Kurds?

[Barzani] I think that the first step toward solving any problem is to acknowledge its presence. What has happened in Turkey is a very positive development for the Kurdish issue. The statements made by Dimerel are, in our opinion, positive. The greater the understanding of the Kurdish issue, the greater the opportunity for an understanding between the Kurdish movement in Iraq and Turkey.

[AL-HAYAH] Now that more than six months have lapsed since the start of negotiations with the Iraqi Government, what is your conviction now on the usefulness of the negotiations? Do you believe that the Kurdish movement in Iraq can still reach an acceptable and satisfactory solution with the current Iraqi regime?

[Barzani] I consider negotiations a form of struggle. We are very serious in our negotiations and we will not back out of them unless the Iraqi Government does so. Despite the existing complexities and problems, I still think that a solution can be achieved through negotiations.

[AL-HAYAH] It seems that you and Jaial Talabani, who shares the KF chairmanship with you, hold different viewpoints. What is your comment on this?

[Barzani] To start, I think that an issue as important as negotiations concerning the destiny of a people must be tackled with utter honesty. The negotiations have not been held on the basis of an independent decision by a party or an individual. The decision was unanimous. The first delegation to go to Baghdad was led by Talabani. There has been consensus of opinion and unanimous agreement on the papers that have been discussed

many of which have been completed. I cannot disavow in Kurdistan on what we agreed to in Baghdad. We let the the Iraqi Government in Baghdad know the issues on which we disagreed. We told them clearly: We disagree with you on this or that point. I will not back out of what we agreed to in Baghdad, even if some other parties do so. I believe in ethical and moral commitment.

In our (the front's) meetings, there is no disagreement on commitment to a peaceful solution or on favoring it over any other option. What I consider to be Talabani's official position is the position I hear from him at the KF political leadership meetings. What he says at these meetings is his official position. As for the statements I hear from this or that newspaper, agency, or radio—these statements are his concern.

We may disagree in opinion, but there is agreement on our preference for a peaceful solution. I emphasize that there is no division of roles. I refuse to share roles with anybody in this world. There is nothing that I fear, or on which I will hesitate, the moment we develop the conviction that an agreement is ready, provided that this agreement ensures the minimal limit of our people's demands. In such a case, we will have no objection to signing the agreement.

But if the agreement is not ready and satisfactory, then there is no force that can make us sign it. Therefore, we don't need to divide roles, because we must deal with this particular issue with utter honesty.

[AL-HAYAH] The reason I have asked this question is that there is an impression that you seek to conclude an agreement with Baghdad at any price. The issue of demarcation of the self-rule area and of Kirkuk is also raised within this context. You, personally and the KDP leadership are accused of being ready to abandon this issue. How true are these accusations?

[Barzani] If these accusations were true, I would have concluded the agreement with the Iraqi Government. We are certainly not prepared to conclude an agreement at any price. In fact, we are not compelled to do so. Moreover, our struggle history does not permit me to embark on such a step. I believe that our people need peace and stability, and I will do my utmost to ensure security and stability. As long as we are not permitted to demand more than self-rule, I see no reason to resume the fighting. I will exert my utmost effort to see that not a single round is fired. But this doesn't at all mean that I am prepared to conclude an agreement at any price. Rather, I want a fair and honorable agreement that meets our people's minimum demands.

As to the question of demarcation of the (autonomous) area on which we have not agreed, when negotiations on this issue reached the final phase, I noticed the limit to which the government was prepared to go along with us, and I decided that the agreement was incomplete and that I couldn't sign it. I returned to Kurdistan to consult with the parties to the front. This point is still pending.

We cannot, of course, relinquish a single inch of our land. But if it becomes impossible to accomplish all that we want, then we may agree to postpone a decision on the various disputed issues. Postponement is very different from relinquishment, which is absolutely out of the question. We will accept postponement only if there has to be a compromise.

[AL-HAYAH] Can we say that the impression that there are profound disagreements in the front is a faulty impression?

[Barzani] I don't notice any disagreements. There is a difference in opinion, in viewpoints, and in the projection of opinions, but there is agreement on the principle issue, namely preference for a peaceful solution.

[AL-HAYAH] A phenomenon that has become everybody's subject of discussion is proliferating in Kurdistan. This phenomenon consists of the negatives that have developed in Kurdish society during this period. There are excesses, thefts, and corruption. How do you think you can treat these frustrating phenomena?

[Barzani] Yes, we are suffering from these phenomena. We have made major efforts to control the problems. Perhaps one of the main reasons that motivated me to put forth the election idea is to have a single decision-making center. The solution is in removing the rule of the militias. We prefer that this be done in a democratic manner. We must get rid of the militias in order to wipe out these negative phenomena.

[AL-HAYAH] Are you encouraged by the fact that there has been no internecine fighting, despite all the negatives and despite the proliferation of arms?

[Barzani] In the 10th, and latest, KDP Congress, we adopted a resolution prohibiting internecine fighting. We have adhered, and we will continue to adhere, to this resolution. This is certainly a healthy phenomenon. Despite the presence of this vast number of armed people, no serious incident has occurred even though there are daily problems. It is hoped that no serious problems will develop in the future, either.

[AL-HAYAH] There is an ongoing debate in Iraqi political circles on the opposition forces and on the possibility of their holding a second conference in which all the opposition forces, including the KF, participate. What is your assessment of these efforts? Will the front participate?

[Barzani] The Kurdish people's position and the framework which the conference will determine for the Kurdish people's rights must be made clear before the front makes a decision to participate. There is also the issue of democracy in Iraq. Before we make a decision, these two points must be made completely clear. We will make the necessary decision in light of these two points.

[AL-HAYAH] To date, there is no decision to participate?

[Barzani] No, we haven't made a final decision. In fact, we haven't received an invitation yet.

[AL-HAYAH] If this issue is settled to the front's satisfaction, and if you participate in the conference, what are the objectives which you think the conference must pursue?

[Barzani] If the objective is propaganda or if it is to serve the interest of a country in the region, then I believe that the Iraqi opposition must refuse to hold such a conference. But if there is a serious objective that concerns Iraq's future, the opposition's future, and the Iraqi people's future, then this is a different matter that must be examined thoroughly and carefully.

[AL-HAYAH] Are you convinced that the Kurdish movement's objective must be confined to achieving the Kurds' narrow national demands, or should this movement play a broader role in leading the Iraqi movement in its entirety?

[Barzani] The central slogan of the September revolution (which was launched by the late leader Mustafa Barzani in 1961) is democracy for Iraq and self-rule for Kurdistan, meaning that the Kurdish issue cannot be separated from the Iraqi people's issue. But there is a fact that must be made clear, namely that I am against exploitation of the Kurdish issue as a pressure card and as a bridge over which other people cross, stepping on our bodies, to take power in Iraq. We are not at all prepared to turn into a pressure card in anybody's hand and we are not prepared to be a bridge for others to use.

PUK's Talabani Speaks on Self-Determination

92AE0178A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
22 Dec 91 p 5

[Interview with Jalal Talabani, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Leader, in Iraqi Kurdistan, date not given: "Talabani: Right to Self-Determination To Be Exercised in Independent Democratic Iraq, Brother Oglan Promised Us, in Part, That He Would Announce Suspension of Fighting and Abandon Call for Independent Kurdish State"]

[Text] Iraqi Kurdistan—In an interview given to AL-HAYAH in Iraqi Kurdistan, Jalal Talabani, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] leader, said that the Iraqi Kurds' right to self-determination "must be exercised within an independent, democratic Iraq." He asserted that there is an understanding between him and Barzani on holding elections for a national council in Kurdistan.

Talabani talked in detail about his relations with Abdulla Oglan, the Kurdish Workers Party [PKK] leader, saying that he tried to persuade Oglan to halt the fighting (against the Turkish authorities) for a year or for six months, at least. Following is the text of the interview:

[AL-HAYAH] It seems that there is a fundamental change in the PUK policy. The "self-determination" slogan has been replaced by the "self-rule" slogan. How do you explain this?

[Talabani] The truth is that this is nothing new. The PUK has been flying the slogan of "self-determination" since it was founded. It views self-rule as an acceptable democratic step constituting a part of the democratic demands. It is the PUK's opinion that a solution to the Kurdish issue can only be accomplished with the right to self-determination. This is why self-determination is one of the slogans reiterated by the PUK day and night through the radio and television stations it controls.

But we believe that the right to self-determination must be exercised within an independent, democratic Iraq, meaning that there should be no secession from Iraq. We call for a democratic federal Iraqi state and we believe that democracy and federalism are capable of developing an acceptable solution to Iraq's problems, including the Kurdish issue.

[AL-HAYAH] Within this context, many people speak of disagreements between you and Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). How far does your understanding with your colleague in the Kurdistan Front (KF) chairmanship go?

[Talabani] I don't deny that there are different opinions and varied methods, but I believe that we have common fundamental objectives and that day by day, we are moving closer to a common understanding, even on issues on which we hold different opinions. It cannot be denied that the credit goes to the "dictatorship" for this. By rejecting all the Kurdish people's legitimate democratic demands and by insisting on lopping off more than one half the so-called self-rule region of Kurdistan, the dictatorship helps greatly in bringing our viewpoints and our opinions closer to each other.

[AL-HAYAH] Within this context, to what degree are you in agreement on holding elections for a national council for Kurdistan?

[Talabani] We are in total, full, and complete agreement on this issue. When brother Mas'ud presented the idea of holding elections, we blessed and supported it and sought to develop it so that it would incorporate the election of a national council and of municipal and village councils. We are in full agreement that the elections have to be free and impartial, and under international supervision, if possible. If this proves impossible, then let them be held under the supervision of the European Parliament and in the presence of international observers. This Kurdistan council will be empowered to settle all the fundamental issues pending in Kurdistan.

[AL-HAYAH] To what degree are you in agreement or disagreement on your position toward the opposition forces?

[Talabani] I can say that we also agree on the fundamental questions and principles of this issue. We both support participation in the Iraqi opposition's activities.

[AL-HAYAH] Will the council be an alternative to the central government?

[Talabani] In my opinion, the council will be tantamount to the Kurdish people's true representative, who is empowered to ratify or reject the fundamental issues, such as agreement with the Iraqi Government and the creation of a democratic administration for Kurdistan. We cannot accept the presence of an endless governmental vacuum in the Kurdish area. By withdrawing from Kurdistan, the Iraqi Government has tacitly acknowledged the Kurdish people's right to manage their own affairs. It is unreasonable that we should continue to live in anarchy.

On the other hand, the international resolution adopted by the League of Nations in 1924 on annexing Kurdistan to the State of Iraq stipulates implicitly that the State of Iraq has to prove its eligibility to rule by safeguarding the Kurdish people's life and human rights and by refraining from threatening the Kurdish people's existence. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Government has violated, and continues to violate, all these obligations. We believe that an elected national council will be an alternative to the central government in matters pertaining to self-rule. As for foreign and international relations and central issues that must be determined by representatives of the Iraqi people, both Arabs and Kurds, this council cannot be an alternative to the central government.

[AL-HAYAH] Are you, in contrast with others, convinced that the Kurds are ready for the democratic experiment?

[Talabani] I believe that all peoples are prepared for exercising democracy. Anybody who says the contrary espouses an imperialist or reactionary viewpoint that sees that peoples are not fit for democracy. As for the Kurdish people, I believe that they are prepared to exercise democracy magnificently. Let me give you an example. Nearly all the Kurdish people are armed, and there is a number of parties within and outside the KF competing with each other and, at times, even hostile to each other. Despite this, no internecine warring or fighting has occurred in the absence of a central government. Each party has its offices, papers, and radio stations and, in the case of the PUK, even a television station. Each party has its own banners and its special celebration occasions. Even the criticism exchanged by these parties has begun to assume a logical and objective character. All this is decisive proof of the Kurdish people's ability to exercise democracy, which I am sure will be reinforced by the scheduled elections.

[AL-HAYAH] Debates are held within and outside the front on the method and principle of the scheduled elections. Some call for proportionate representation and others advocate the principle of electoral districts. Whom does the PUK support?

[Talabani] The PUK is not concerned with what principle is adopted, because it is confident of itself and is capable of running in the elections, regardless of the method embraced. We believe that we will make greater gains if the elections are held on the basis of electoral districts. However, we have accepted the proportionate representation principle that has been approved by the KF leadership, but making it conditional that a party must win at least seven percent of the votes to be represented in the parliament. Logically, we agree with the opinion that says that proportionate representation is more democratic. The other opinion says that we need a new administration, stability, and security in this phase. Therefore, it is better to adopt the principle of districts in this phase, and then we can move to the principle of proportionalism in a future phase. This, too, has its logical justification.

Let me tell you a secret. The majority of the PUK leadership members voted for the principle of electoral districts. Only I and two other colleagues voted for proportionate representation. Thus, the PUK position has been identical to that of the KDP position on this issue. But during the debate within the front's political leadership, we developed a compromise by adopting proportionate representation and establishing the seven-percent requirement as a condition.

[AL-HAYAH] There is complaint by numerous independent Kurds who see that the principle of proportionate representation will deny them the opportunity to attain decision-making positions through election. What is your comment on this?

[Talabani] We have noticed this. It is a reasonable complaint. This is why we have decided that proportionalism should encompass the independents' rights. If an independent candidate gains a certain percentage of the votes, then he will be entitled to become an elected member of the council. The truth is that this aspect was one of the reasons that motivated the PUK leadership to favor the principle of districts. I believe that independents can run for election as part of the list of the party to which they are closest. After the elections, they can choose to form their independent bloc or blocs.

[AL-HAYAH] Can you explain the circumstances engulfing the PKK issue? This issue attracts great attention from Turkish political and press circles. It has been mentioned that you, personally, have played a role in mediation between this party and the Turkish authorities and that you managed to persuade the PKK leadership to suspend its military operations temporarily. What is the truth?

[AL-HAYAH] The truth is that there is a problem with the PKK. It is an old problem that is due to political and intellectual differences and to struggle methods. For example, we disagree with the PKK on glorifying the leader and on praising his role unreasonably. But we in the PUK have believed, and continue to believe, that maintaining the relationship with this party is better

than boycotting it, because boycotting will motivate the party, especially its leader, to listen only to hostile or hypocritical opinions and to turn a deaf ear to the opinion of advising friends who put the Kurdish nation's interests above other interests. At times, the PKK reacts tensely to the observations we express and considers such observations hollow and meaningless. Perhaps it is no secret to you that the PKK reviles us at times.

There is no country for which they don't consider us the agents. At times, we are Germany's agents and at other times we are the agents of France, Britain, Italy, or the United States, and lately, Turkey's agents. But we pay no heed to these ridiculous accusations. We believe that the facts will triumph. We carry on with the policy of dialogue and meeting with the PKK leadership whenever possible. Accordingly, I sometimes write letters to brother Abdulla Oglan, the PKK leader, and I send him representatives, mediators, or even some of our common friends to explain the facts to him and to make some demands. One of the things that we view as essential is the issue of the latest developments in Turkey. We believe that it is the duty of every Kurd in and outside Turkey to examine and understand the new and important developments that have cropped up in this country recently, and then to take the right position toward them. In our opinion, this is in the interest of the Kurdish people primarily, in the interest of democracy in Turkey and the Middle East secondly, and of world peace subsequently.

We have tried to persuade brother Abdulla Oglan of two things: to understand the new situation and to suspend the fighting for a certain period of time—for a year or, at least for six months, for example—during which the opportunity is given to dialogue and to a political solution to the Kurdish issue in Turkey. Our proposal is flexible. We believe that suspension of fighting by the PKK will serve this party in several aspects. First, it will demonstrate to Europe and the world that the PKK is not a terrorist party that recognizes nothing but killing. Second, it will improve the PKK's standing in Turkish society, and third, it will help the liberal, democratic, and socialist tendency, thus wresting away the cards of the radical, chauvinistic elements in Turkey who are hostile to every democratic measure, especially toward the Kurds. We have also asked the PKK to suspend fighting.

For us, there is another vital point, namely to suspend PKK military operations launched from Iraqi Kurdistan. A brother I had sent to Oglan came back convinced that Oglan will fulfill two promises: not to launch attacks on Turkish territory from Iraqi Kurdistan, and to halt fighting for a certain period of time. Recently, I received a PKK delegation that included a representative sent from Syria and the PKK official in charge of the party in Iraqi Kurdistan. The meeting was cordial and we exchanged reproach and criticism. We explained our position to them and reiterated our previous demands. We told them that it would be better for them and for their people to adopt this position. We are now awaiting

an official, written response from the PKK leadership. We believe that the meeting with the party representatives was beneficial and influential. Regarding dialogue, it may not be direct dialogue between them and the Turkish Government, but between the government and Kurdish deputies in the Turkish parliament, even with well-known Kurdish notables in Turkey. We believe that when the party suspends the fighting and when security is established in the region, there will be no justification for the presence of the village guards who collaborate with the Turkish forces, for example, or for the continued detention of Kurds in jails. We also believe that a general amnesty must be granted, including amnesty for Kurds jailed in Turkey and for Kurdish exiles in Europe and elsewhere, so they can return to their country and can exercise their right to citizenship and to legitimate political action. All this will subsequently lead to bolstering the political, popular, and parliamentary struggle.

[AL-HAYAH] What about abandoning the slogan of armed struggle?

[Talabani] Part of the promise that brother Oglan made to us was that he would hold a press conference and proclaim the suspension of fighting and his party's new political position, including abandonment of the call for an independent Kurdish state. I believe that he has proclaimed his abandonment of the idea of an independent state but has not declared the other position. We are waiting for him to do so.

[AL-HAYAH] Finally, let us return to Iraqi Kurdistan. Do you fear that the KF will break up and that internecine fighting will develop?

[Talabani] I have absolutely no fears in this regard. I believe that relations between the two main parties in the KF, i.e., the PUK and the KDP, are being bolstered and cemented. This also applies to relations with the other parties, excluding one party which has taken a certain isolated position toward the Iraqi Government. Otherwise, relations among parties in the KF are more promising than ever before.

[AL-HAYAH] How optimistic are you about the near future?

[Talabani] I am optimistic by nature. But now I am totally optimistic regarding the KF's survival and the hoped-for results from the national council that is scheduled to be elected in Kurdistan.

[Text] The House of Representatives ended the October session in the final year of this legislature, just as expected, without pursuing the opposition's bills and without the promised debate on the government's proposed law requiring accumulated wealth to be declared.

The government and its majority considered it enough to pass a budget without tackling the underlying problems of concern to a citizenry beset by a heavy tax burden, price hikes, and the various aspects of the social and economic crisis.

The opposition's request to stay in session and take up proposed reforms of the election laws (in particular, new voter registration lists, election campaign organization, and sanctions against electoral fraud) was rejected by the government and its majority who favor the status quo—a status quo that is detrimental to democracy and to the expression of the voters' true wishes.

The opposition's purpose in proposing the bills was to provide the mechanisms needed to ensure free and genuine elections in an atmosphere of total accountability, resulting in truly representative institutions at not only the national level, but also the local, provincial and professional levels.

In addition, the opposition insisted that the government-proposed bill on the declaration of accumulated wealth should be debated in a plenary session and subsequently passed into law. The opposition wants to clean up public administration, safeguard its reputation, and preserve the dignity of all honest civil servants. But the government and its majority—preferring continued confusion and unwilling to put an end to corruption, misappropriation of public funds, and illegal enrichment—are trying to postpone deliberations on the bill indefinitely. They will not hear of the opposition's proposed amendments, which would broaden the scope of the bill to include cabinet ministers, high-ranking civil servants, ambassadors, speakers of legislative assemblies at the commune level, etc.

It was promised that the bill would be debated before the close of the October session. But that did not happen, and it is possible that the bill may never be debated, at least not in a plenary session, during the term of the present legislature.

Thus, the House of Representatives has once again demonstrated its inability to respond to the expectations of the citizens and bring itself into step with the regional and international environment. But that should come as no great surprise: Nothing more could be expected from an institution that is out of touch with the people, just as its members are detached from the voters and fail to express the voters' wishes in any regard.

MOROCCO

Parliament Criticized for Not Fulfilling Promises

92AF0273B Rabat L'OPINION in French
31 Dec 91 p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "A Parliament Out of Touch With The People"]

Polisario Said Disengaging From Peace Process*92AF0258B Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French
26 Dec 91 p 3*

[Unattributed article: "Mr Omar Hadrami: The 'Polisario' Is Trying To Disengage From the Peace Process"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Rabat (MAP)—"The Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] is becoming increasingly aware of the fact that if it follows the (peace) process already started, and complies with the terms and conditions already approved, it can only lose," according to Mr. Omar Hadrami, former and founding member of the "Polisario."

In an interview published by the weekly MAROC-HEBDO in its last issue, Mr. Omar Hadrami stressed that "Polisario" leaders have "decided that the process, as it is now, does not suit them, and that they should find ways to disengage themselves."

In the light of the new data, especially the report submitted to the Security Council by the UN general secretary, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, it is clear that the reason for the delay is none other than the problem of establishing identification criteria. But, then, who was it who brought this about, and "who is it who refuses even to discuss it," if not the Polisario, Mr. Hadrami pointed out.

However, once "these criteria have been finalized (by the Security Council), things should go faster" and the "Polisario" will no longer be able to pin the blame on Mr. Manz or anyone else, he went on.

Concerning the resignation of Mr. Johannes Manz and the regrets expressed by the "Polisario," Mr. Hadrami explained right away that this was not really a resignation. Mr. Manz, whose mandate expires on 31 December, does not want a new mandate. His country (Switzerland) has appointed him ambassador to the United Nations.

"As for the Polisario's regrets, that is all hypocrisy," he added.

"In the past few weeks, the Polisario has kept attacking and maligning UN officials, including Mr. Manz. The Polisario also refused to meet Johannes Manz when he came to let the parties know what voters identification criteria the UN general secretary had adopted. How can it now regret his departure?" he pointed out.

Concerning the dissensions within the "Polisario," Mr. Hadrami mentioned the disagreements and mutual accusations among its leaders, citing as an example "a stormy confrontation" that recently opposed Mohamed Lamine Bouhali and Bachir Mostapha Sayed, each blaming the other for the "state of collapse" and the "deadlock" in which the "front" now finds itself.

Two Initiatives

Mr. Hadrami added that, as the process starts lagging behind schedule, the inhabitants of the camps and their children called back from abroad to swell the population are beginning to lose patience, and some of them do not hesitate to brave all dangers and perils and return to Morocco. The military refuse to rejoin their units, and everything is getting out of control.

To cope with this situation, Mr. Hadrami noted, the "Polisario" has taken two initiatives: an overall information campaign in the camps to explain that the referendum will be delayed. The inhabitants of the camps thought they would go back home this month or next month, and, more than anything else, they were looking forward to being reunited with their families. And, second initiative, the "Polisario" triggered a general alert and even built a wall around Hassi Robinet in order to foil would-be deserters, who have to undergo intensive training by way of punishment.

"But the people no longer want to remain in this situation, especially the young" who "have begun to criticize the leadership," he said.

They tried to send them back to the Algerian towns where they were students, but "the Algerian Government has informed the Polisario that, from now on, it will provide only teaching. Food, housing, and transportation will have to be paid for by the Polisario," Mr. Hadrami explained.

The malaise, however, has become general. The "Polisario" no longer manages to cover its own internal needs. Food distributions, which used to take place twice a month, are now taking place only once every other month, and the Algerian truckers who supplied the camps refuse to go on doing so unless the "Polisario" increases the trucking fee, he went on.

Lacking logistic means, the Polisario cannot cope with the situation, he added.

"I can assure you that this is not demagoguery, but if these people could do so, they would not hesitate for one moment to regain Morocco," Mr. Omar Hadrami, who has lived for so long in the Tindouf camps and knows them and their secrets inside and out, concluded.

Budgetary Logic, Efficacy Questioned*92AF0273C Rabat L'OPINION in French
25 Dec 91 pp 1, 4*

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "Governmental Logic"]

[Text] In one of its marathon sessions, the House of Representatives is pursuing its discussion of the draft budget with the adoption of sector budgets pending, of course, the majority's approval of the document in its entirety.

Naturally, the amendments proposed by the opposition were rejected, although they are important and address vital problems demanding priority treatment.

The "majority," true to its ways, systematically dismisses everything that involves the social sectors or is likely to improve the living conditions of the poor.

When the opposition proposes to ease unemployment, however partially, with the creation of 45,000 new jobs (compared with a mere 15,000 proposed in the new budget) in a way that will not raise costs to the state or require new revenues, the "majority," beholden to the government, rejects the amendment and refuses to create new headings in the budget.

When a proposal is made to raise the salaries of employee categories covered by scales 1 to 9 and improve the material conditions of workers whose purchasing power is seriously eroded by a continually rising cost of living, the government and the majority are opposed. They prefer to maintain the status quo while simultaneously adding to the tax burden either by instituting new taxes or by raising those which cause hardship enough to the working masses, either directly or indirectly.

Moreover, the government and the majority refuse to hear of the citizens' right to decent housing and are unwilling to promote low-cost housing for reasons surely known to the developers and speculators who only aggravate the housing crisis, the economic and social repercussions of which are serious.

A tax exemption for the low-income brackets and an appreciable increase in the meager pensions paid to retirees are hardly prominent in the thoughts of the legislators in the majority whose primary concern is to protect their class interests and preserve their privileges.

It is evident that the government under-estimates the importance of social policy, neglecting this fundamental area of concern on the pretext of granting priority to financial equilibrium.

Yet, the amendments proposed by the opposition are not utopian or impossible to achieve. The problems lie, very simply, in the psychological complex triggered by each of the opposition's proposals, causing the government and the majority to reject them systematically, even if it means sacrificing the social sector and the vital interests of the disadvantaged segments of the population.

Recent Campus Disturbances Probed

Number of Students Involved

92AF0233A Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 3

[Article: "AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI Special Correspondent in Fez Provides New Details on Disturbances,

Interviews Victims of 'Landing and Conquest' Operation; University Climate After Disturbances; Significant Questions: Why Did Authorities Prevent Buses From Getting to University But Didn't Stop Attackers; Two Algerians Were Detained, So Why Haven't They Been Referred to Courts; 280 Persons Were Arrested, So Why Have Only 28 of Them Been Tried"]

[Text] Groups of students were arriving in Zahr el Mihraz University in the morning as usual and one could hardly believe that there had been disturbances.

But what revives the memory and insists on bringing back the image of the beatings, the wounds, the clubs, the cleavers, the troops, and the tear-gas bombs which were used on 31 October 1991, is what the students call the "militarization."

Troops were guarding every entrance. They consisted of members of the auxiliary forces armed with rifles, and elements of the Mobile Intervention Corps [CMI]. Surete Nationale vehicles were roaming the alleys separating the buildings of the various colleges.

Outwardly, everything seemed normal. Some students were drinking their coffee at the coffee shop, others were studying, a third group formed a discussion circle, and yet others were busy with their preparations. Yet, one felt that this tranquillity was shaky and that caution and anticipation were in the air. This is why it was difficult to make some potential interviewees feel reassured quickly.

In the coffee shop located in the center of the university, some students were surprised by my remarks about "tranquility" and the "restored normalcy." One of them said: "A considerable number of students are still absent from the university. Others have decided to stay away out of fear and to wait for the situation to subside. They have decided to abandon this campus, which poses the threat of the gravest consequences."

A second student sitting with us summed up the continuing tense situation in four points, saying: "First, I believe that the presence of this number of troops, whom we needed when we were attacked and who did not intervene then, contributes, in itself, to the continued tension. What is more, the **rapid deployment forces, for example, do not behave themselves, especially with the female students, to whom they say things that cannot be repeated here. Second, student grants, meager as they are, have not been dispensed to everybody. When we learn that the majority of students are not from Fez and are not boarders in the university quarter, then we realize that their situation will be truly worrisome. Third, student union activity is totally paralyzed now. When the students wanted to start an [discussion] session yesterday, the troops intervened and stopped them. The fourth point is one already referred to by the colleague who has preceded me, and it concerns the absence of a large number of students from the university for several reasons."

Significant Questions

On the same day, the university was hosting a meeting of the University Council. The security forces' negative stance during the university disturbances was one of the first concerns of this council.

According to informed sources, this point had been discussed with the governor of Fez prior to the University Council meeting and it was said that the failure to intervene immediately was due to two considerations: First, the government was not aware of the nature of what had been going on and, second, there wasn't enough reinforcement from the [army] troops.

The governor's response that "I was examining with great interest what had been witnessed by the students" raises questions of major significance:

Why did the authorities remain silent on the weapons that had been seized in the university a month prior to the 'landing and conquest operation'? Who delayed the reinforcement about which the governor spoke, and which he said was lacking, at a time when everybody knew the time of the fundamentalists' attack, keeping in mind that they had performed their morning prayers and their own funeral prayers? Why did the authorities prevent buses from getting to the university on the morning of the "operation," but did not prevent the vast numbers of fundamentalists who had arrived from other cities from getting to the university?

What is the secret behind the fact that the troops blocked all accesses to the university but neglected a single important access from the direction of ** (Ouasilin)?

The director of the university quarter knew about the attacks, and notified the residents about them, and suggested that they evacuate the quarter, because the situation did not look good. He then agreed with them that they should stay in their rooms for protection. The quarter even has a huge iron door fastened shut with chains. But who opened the doors on the morning of the attacks?

After the incidents, 280 people were arrested. Why have only 30 of these suspects been taken before the courts? Where are the others? It is said that two Algerians were detained, but where are they and why have they not been brought to court? Really, we do not have the answers to these questions, but they carry hidden answers that we will leave to our readers.

Account of Events

92AF0233B Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 3

Article: "Fez University Professors Talk About Student Situation, Elements Behind Its Explosion; Disturbances Are Not Confrontation Between Two Factions But Merely Political Issue; Fundamentalists Joined National

Federation of Moroccan Students To Control It, But Turned Participation Plan into Violence When They Failed")

[Text] The Fez University disturbances couldn't have been spontaneous or created out of thin air. The student situation must have had a part in touching off the conditions. In what condition was the student arena in Fez before the outbreak of the wave of violence? Why did this wave erupt at this particular time? Can the disturbances be considered just a confrontation between two hostile factions? We come close to the answers to these questions through interviews we have conducted with a number of professors from the various colleges of Fez University, in their capacity as people who have lived with and continue to live with the student situation from a different angle. Consequently, they have opinions and conclusions on which one could draw for a better understanding of what took place at the university.

The atmosphere in the scattered buildings called Zahr el Mihraz University is still charged. All the entrances to the university were under watch by trucks carrying auxiliary troops and some vehicles carrying rapid deployment forces. National Security vehicles cruised ceaselessly the alleys separating the colleges from the university quarter.

The law school was quiet. Student numbers were relatively large and activity was almost normal. But one experienced a sense of caution that could be read in the halls and eyes in an upper floor. The conversation of a group of professors on that floor touched on nothing other than the disturbances.

A female professor told her colleagues: "In yesterday's class, the students asked me for two minutes to read a statement refuting the charges made against them. They also observed a minute's silence for the victims of the disturbances. Veiled female students, of whom I have many, also observed that minute of silence."

I entered the professors' lobby and heard a lot about the disturbances. But I wanted to know why the fundamentalists resorted to the method they had embraced. One professor said: "The fundamentalists' activities are nothing new. Even clashes are old in Fez. It is to be noted that the Islamists had long refused to operate within the framework of the National Union of Moroccan Students [UNEM] and had characterized it as the atheists federation. But they were then convinced of the futility of this approach, and decided to join the federation in what may be called the phase of collective coexistence. Joint demonstrations were organized. Those who have participated in the cultural weeks organized by the UNEM, either as lecturers or escorts, must have noticed that the fundamentalists were eager to get a large share of the entries. At times, they were given the floor intentionally just so they would stop complaining repeatedly that they are suppressed or ostracized.

"I personally participated in a cultural week with a lecture. It was determined that there would be 10 entries

in the debate, of which the fundamentalists got four. But all their entries went beyond the topic at hand. Some were even provocative, considering that one of the fundamentalists addressed the students as 'you atheists.'

"Moreover, the fundamentalists' activity was not based on student union demands. Rather, all their demonstrations were for the purpose of advocacy and preaching.

"Despite this, the fundamentalists discovered that the tactic of collective coexistence did not bear fruit. So they decided, in my opinion, to rush their objective. Perhaps they had modified their plan in order to monopolize, not share, the student arena."

Another professor interrupted, concluding, on the basis of his colleague's opinion, that the problem cannot be summed up as a confrontation between two factions, one a "believer" and the other an "infidel." Rather, this professor considered it a purely political problem, saying: "A simple reading of the scenario of the developments shows that it is impossible for students to do what has been done, and I mean here the types of weapons used and the precise organization methods. If it is certain that the majority of the elements who led the attack were not students, then it is logical that the disturbances are tied not only to a conflict between two parties, and not only to university problems."

A third professor cited an incident he had had with a fundamentalist while he was giving a lesson. By citing the incident, he wanted to underline some of the attack's objectives concerning the university. This professor said that, while he was giving his lesson to freshman students one day, a student stood up and began to chant the call for prayer. The professor stopped him, of course. The incident would have culminated in a confrontation had it not been for the professor's answer, which the student found difficult to refute. The professor told the student that with his act, he was obstructing a true jihad [struggle], namely the jihad to acquire an education.

What the fundamentalists have done proves that they have gained strength. Is this true and is this an old issue or a new one?

A professor answered: "As a colleague has already said, it has been noticed that the fundamentalists have not wished to coexist with the other tendencies or factions comprising the UNEM. They want to take over everything and cancel the others. I believe, and this is my personal position, that what made the fanatics more zealous, especially in the university, are some official acts, especially the events at the Casablanca School of Medicine. When a minister goes ahead and holds dialogue with the fanatics as a political action, such an act contributes to further rashness and zeal on their part."

I asked the group of professors, which grew bigger when other professors from other colleges joined us:

"Do I understand from the above that religious radicals are the only ones who disrupt the normal progress of studies?"

A professor from the Science College answered: "I don't think so. The fact is, university conditions are in flux, and all students contribute to this situation. Insofar as the pedagogical aspect is concerned, students raise the slogan of 'what is readable, not what is scheduled.' They exert efforts to reduce the number of official hours for higher studies, they avoid printed [reference] materials, and they control examination times. Consequently, they pounce on the pedagogical jurisdiction and they engage in side-conflicts with either the administration or some professors. Instead of supporting educational reform and contributing to the reform issues, the struggle has impeded the normal progress of the educational process. Consequently, the university has entered perilous grounds that are far from the responsibility and sedateness for which student struggles were well-known.

"Students can discuss the educational issues and offer alternatives. But they are not entitled to encroach upon pedagogical jurisdiction. They are one party, not everything."

Another professor interrupted: "From struggle greetings and boycotting their colleagues, to destroying the loudspeaker at the Law College and disrupting studies at the Science College—all this is not a healthy condition. Boycott is not a weapon for turning the balance of forces in favor of the student and for making the other components of the university understand the student's projections and demands.

"In the past, when students boycotted lessons, they took all the steps to tell the officials and the public the cause of the boycott. Today, an all-out boycott is staged, but it has no reverberations at the level of the other components. I believe that all these are unhealthy elements that contribute to impeding the educational process."

Another professor expressed the belief that the condition of the university campus has its own role. He said that Fez University is surrounded by an immense wall which encompasses nearly all the colleges and on which millions were spent. This wall gave the university campus its meaning. Removing this wall and building roads that have divided the university and turned it into a number of scattered buildings which are entered by whomever wishes to enter, and which livestock sometimes graze next to has contributed to creating an abnormal atmosphere in Fez. He added to this the problem of overcrowding from which the universities suffer, and which does not at all help create a climate that enhances attaining an education.

Must the student's social condition be one of the elements that determine the abnormal condition at the university?

A professor answered: "Of course. Perhaps this condition is fundamental. Figures have their significance.

There are 40,000 students in Fez, 25,000 of whom come from outside Fez. The university quarter provides only 5,000 beds. This means that 20,000 students live in peripheral quarters, including Douar el Askar, Oueinat el Hojjaj, and Douar el Hindia quarters. Fortunate students rent group houses in (Lirak) quarter. If we add to this problem of the meager [study] grant, its late delivery, and the fact that some students are denied it, then we are certainly faced with a situation that could explode at any moment."

Victim's Account

92AF0233C Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 3

[Article: "Only Student Involved in Disturbances To Appear Before Court as Victim and Witness Recounts Details of His Story"]

[Text] Talha Abdelwahab is one of those who were subjected to the most violent assault by the fundamentalists during the second attack, which was staged on 31 October. This student, a sophomore in biology, was the only student in Fez to appear before the court as a victim, a witness, and a plaintiff demanding his civil rights. How was he assaulted? How many attackers were involved? What weapons were used against him? Why this student in particular? What are the charges made against him by the "mufti's office?" **Talha has answered these questions in an interview conducted with him by AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI in his humble room in Lirak quarter, Fez. His condition continues to be serious.

On the morning of 31 October, Talha was transported, while unconscious, from a sidewalk next to the Science College annex on Imorzar Street to el Ghassani Hospital. He was left untreated until he regained consciousness. At 1400, the gendarmerie came and interrogated him for two full hours. Only then was Talha's treatment begun. He was kept under guard at the hospital until the next day, when he was transported to the gendarmerie station and taken from there to the investigating magistrate at the Fez Court of First Instance. Because of his poor health condition, Talha was not able to stay with the magistrate for long, and was enough for him to confirm his identification of four persons whose photographs he had identified as those of the likely attackers, out of seven photographs presented to him at the hospital. The investigating magistrate asked him to appear in court the following Monday.

Talha came out drained and the gendarmerie took him to their center, where they photographed him and then transported him to his aunt's place in Fez.

He was not in a physical condition that allowed him to stay in Fez, far from his family that lives in Ain Aicha, located km 85 from Fez. So he went to his family and was unable to show up for the court session.

His failure to appear motivated the gendarmerie station in Ain Aicha to arrest him and hand him over to the Fez gendarmerie, who detained him until the following court session, which was convened on 7 November 1992. He arrived late. The four persons suspected of assaulting him were before the court. The court chief asked Talha: "What happened to you?"

Talha answered: "On Thursday, 31 October, I took the bus from Zahr el Mihraz University to the annex at 0800. As soon as the bus stopped at the terminal and we disembarked, three individuals intercepted me. One of them held me to his chest from behind. Then another group joined the three men and one of them said: 'This is the one who ridicules us at the annex.' They asked me for my national identity card, which I didn't have with me. They then asked me: 'Where are the comrades?'"

"I responded: 'I don't know what you want from me.' One of them, a strongly-built man, said: 'We want to drink your blood, you freethinker, you atheist, you infidel.'"

"After punching me in the face, another individual said: 'Here, take it, you accursed man' (he said it in classical Arabic). Another man interposed: 'Let us not beat him here next to other students. Let us take him down to (el Hasida).'"

"They did, in fact, drag me to that place. They took all my belongings. After crossing the street, I refused to walk away with them. One of them took out a piece of iron and hit me on the head with it. I fell to the ground. Four of them then carried me by the feet and the arms for about 50 meters. Then another group came out of a hiding place and one of the men, who sounded to me like the man in charge, ordered them: 'Strengthen God's religion with your clubs!' They actually took out their clubs and started beating me.

"More than 10 radicals beat me all over my body, focusing on my right arm, which was broken, my right leg, and my ribs. They did not stop beating me until the gendarmerie arrived. The fundamentalists dispersed then, and the gendarmerie put me on the sidewalk and left me there until an ambulance arrived and found me unconscious."

B. Abdelaziz From the Science College

At 2000 on Monday, 20 October, B. Abdelaziz, a student, was heading for his place of residence in al-Quds quarter. The road he took was dark, but he was used to it. Moreover, he was in the company of another student. But this time, this road hid an unpleasant surprise, about which Abdelaziz said:

"Suddenly, a radical element, whom I couldn't recognize in the dark, emerged and without saying a word to me, and hit me with a thick club on my leg until I fell down. I saw four other people and tried to flee, but I encountered another group of radicals consisting of five members. I was surrounded and blows started falling on me

from more than one hand, focusing on my head, my arms, and my legs. They kept on beating me for nearly five minutes. Consequently, I lost consciousness and did not regain it until I was at **el Atlas Hospital**, where I stayed for seven days. I suffered serious injuries to the head and to the rest of my body. To show you how serious my condition was, I paid the hospital more than 7,500 [Moroccan] dirhams for the treatment I received.

Commentary by Berrada

92AF0233D Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 6

[Article by Mohamed Berrada: "Terrorism, Democracy: Some Students' Use of Terrorism Is Copied From International Terrorism"]

[Text] The words "terrorism" and "democracy" have become preeminent among us in wake of the bloody disturbances experienced by a number of Moroccan universities.

Now that the tension has subsided a little, perhaps we can approach the issue with analysis and contemplation, instead of feverish reaction and agitation that expose the bias of prejudice.

It is well-known that the two words through which I want to peer at what we have experienced in the past few weeks have different meanings, depending on the context and the conditions defining the parties involved in the dialogue. Some may use the concept of democracy while planning to confiscate the citizens' right to disagree and to choose an ideal democracy embodied in a group, a party, or an irreproachable individual who commits no deception. A commando or liberationist act may be characterized as a terrorist act, because he who benefits from the exploitation of others does not wish things to change.

Therefore, it is our duty to define what we mean by these two words in the current context. In the past 10 years in particular, the word "democracy" has held a special place in Morocco's political lexicon and on people's tongues, gaining two fundamental meanings: the chain of [acts of] democracy as understood and implemented by the regime through party plurality, a parliament, and relative freedom of the press, but without allowing this democratic structure to create a real change that encompasses the decision-making and the influential agencies as it encompasses the citizen's status and rights.

Democracy as a venue for overcoming the crisis by organizing the political and social struggle, by allowing change in favor of the majority's interests, and by involving the majority in the government and in decision-making.

I mean by "terrorism" the antithesis of democracy, i.e., the endeavor to impose one's opinion with violence, to confiscate the others' right, and to monopolize power.

From this perspective, I find that terrorism always fills the vacuum created by the absence of democracy. It is no exaggeration at all to generalize this observation, because numerous developments in history confirm this antithetical inseparability of terrorism and democracy. Any flaw developing in society's democratic struggle leads to the emergence of terrorism in various shapes and forms.

Accordingly, it is impermissible, in my opinion, to interpret the student clashes and conflicts that have gained a terroristic character as doctrinal and ideological radicalism, or as the consequence of foreign instigation. Such an interpretation is not convincing. Moreover, it creates a curtain that hides the roots of the phenomenon and its links with the formation and development of Morocco's political thinking.

Therefore, I venture to say that the "bloody dialogue" in which some of our university students have engaged simply fills a part of the numerous voids which have been imposed on Morocco since its independence, and for which people have made up with many and varied forms of terrorism. Morocco's state agencies practice various kinds and forms of terrorism—and this is not confined to Morocco—when they rig elections, fight politicization of the people, bring strugglers before the courts, or confiscate freedom of the press and of expression. This democratic vacuum, coupled with terrorism of various kinds, has compelled Morocco to experience, throughout the past 30 years, a feverish struggle for democracy and for abolishing democracy's antithesis and avoiding the manifestations of democratic vacuum, especially the dangers of military coups and armed confrontations between the sons of the same homeland.

In this context, we can consider the ban on the NFMS as a decision that paves the way for the rise of terrorist practices among students. I understand if the government permits a plurality of student organizations, but I consider the ban on an organization with history and roots as tantamount to estrangement between an important youth sector and political society. It is also a decision that advertises one aspect of the democratic crisis. This is because the result which the ban, coupled with the neglect for the students' conditions and rights, has produced is to pave the way for political radicalism and for patrons who hire students' services to support forces that operate confidentially, or that suffer, in their turn, from bans and confiscation. In such a climate, it is easy to transform the students' political message, which is based on impartial criticism and open affiliation, to a "religious message" or an "absolutist ideology" that hides its totalitarian objectives, which it tries to wrap in right and the truth. Thus, the government is fundamentally responsible for the confusion and the uncertainty of a vital sector of society and for the blocked horizons facing this sector. Therefore, the students' use of terrorist action is, in fact, an emulation of the state terrorism and a testing of this terrorism in a different way. When the possibilities of open political action become nonexistent, and when the guarantees of democratic struggle disappear, the alternative is to take refuge in "fanaticism" and

"sectarianism" and to conceal the crux of the struggle by diverting it from the political level to the religious sphere. This is why I am not inclined to characterize the feuding students as "Islamists" and the "al-Qa'idiyun" [an extreme leftist group], because such characterization will not lead us to clear and specific tendencies or positions. Rather, such characterizations are vague and confused products that find their roots in the government's acts of terrorism and in the radical thought generated in the form of reactions to the absence of change-inducing democracy and to confused and shaken values.

Therefore, what has happened cannot be considered a summer cloud that has disturbed our "pure" political and social skies and then departed, leaving the field for the tolerant Moroccan character.

I believe that tying this phenomenon to its roots requires us to say that the government is unable to deal with this phenomenon. Trials and arrests cannot disperse violence and eliminate its causes. Therefore, all of us, the government included, must work to put an end to state terrorism, i.e., to apply democracy in its deepest sense, which gives issues, relations, and power a different form and content so that the struggle can pervade all levels and in broad daylight, and so that every tendency and every force can gain its true weight. Without this, we will only encounter bloody explosions, clashes, and acts of terrorism. Only democracy can fill the fearful void created by terrorism. This democracy is the game, the miracle, the soothing salve. Rather, it is the democracy of struggle that develops a Moroccan citizen, who is responsible for creating and safeguarding new conditions which ensure dialogue and commitment to the required change—a change that serves the individual's rights and the country's future.

One should also say frankly that the parties, organizations, and associations that are not created artificially must also shoulder their decisive role in civilian society and must not allow terrorism to be transformed into a bilateral confrontation pitting the state against radical ideology. The sound response is to revive the initiative to politicize the civilian society and to make it fundamental in the democratic struggle. From this angle, all tendencies, including tendencies that derive their background from religious thought, become equal, and society deals with them according to their logic, political visions, and ability to offer tangible solutions to existing problems. Islam is the religion of all Moroccans. No faction may use it and monopolize it to achieve political ends. By clarifying the political struggle and opening the field to all tendencies, the wagers will become clear, civilian society will regain its ability to make distinctions and to select freely, and every force will gain its true weight. Therefore, it is the parties' responsibility to shift the struggle from the "symbolic" to the "obvious," because this shift will besiege the acts of terrorism employed by some factions that are ousted from civilian and political society.

It is not in the government's interest or society's interest to have the universities continue in their present condition. Cages containing thousands of students who are denied responsible dialogue within organizations and associations which ensure that the students remain in contact with society and that their voice is heard. The Moroccan university's material and moral misery is foremost among the causes that lead to the proliferation of obscure thought and terroristic authoritarianism.

Authorities 'Justified'

92AF0233E Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 6

[Article by Tayeb Benani: "On Peripheries of Latest University Disturbances; Regrettable Confrontations Seek To Strike University Institution; It Is Time for Student Movement To Review Its Stance To Create Climate That Enables It To Contribute Effectively to University Institutions"]

[Text] For weeks, the Moroccan university has witnessed bloody incidents in which radical factions trying to dominate the student movement have clashed with each other. These incidents have assumed a dramatic character in Fez and Oujda; and to a degree in Kenitra, where bladed weapons such as penknives, knives, iron chains, and clubs were used, causing numerous and varied injuries and terrifying students and their guardians.

The brutal methods employed by these radical factions are the same methods used by fascist circles and criminal gangs that give themselves the right to impose their laws, through which they seek to dominate by beatings, torture, and sham trials. Thus, public opinion was shocked and stunned when it learned that students in Oujda were victimized by these fascist methods.

Ideological considerations that claim to be Marxist-Leninist and fanatic religious radicalism are nothing but feeble justifications to which these factions resort to flee their university responsibility and to avoid fulfilling it. Yes, the Moroccan student movement has, since the dawn of independence, played a fundamental role in organizing and enlightening students and in defending their moral and material demands so that the university may perform its main roles, which are embodied in disseminating knowledge, training cadres, and scientific research. If the student arena has always reflected several intellectual, ideological, and political tendencies, then the struggle has always been confined to the sphere in which ideas are confronted with the conventional democratic methods and within the bounds of respect for university ethics.

Thus, the regrettable recent confrontations are, in addition to their criminal character, aimed at the very heart of the entire university institution, with all the deep-rooted traditions of intellectual pluralism and democratic action that the university represents.

What is even more surprising to university people and to the national public is that the feuding factions in the university are relying on ideological principles that have been outdated by developments and outpaced by history, as is made completely evident by the collapse of the communist camp and by the failure of the futile dictatorial methods that offend Islam. Islam disavows such methods, and its sublime and tolerant tenets reject these methods.

The university is the school of new ideas, creativity, and progress, which can be accomplished only in a fraternal and tolerant climate that accepts the other man's opinion.

A university is founded on three mainstays: administration, faculty, and students. All university experiences in all parts of the world have proven that a university cannot perform its mission fully, unless these three elements cooperate within the bounds of give-and-take and continual dialogue. The modern Moroccan university, which has been around since independence, possesses, despite its youth, advanced experience in this regard when compared with the universities of numerous developing countries. The 1975 decree, with its pros and cons, essentially created a dynamic framework for cooperation between the university mainstays, with the purpose of serving their objectives. If professors have contributed positively and effectively within this framework, then acts of one-upmanship in the university—acts motivated by the Marxist-Leninist tendency—have impeded student contribution to university institutions.

The Moroccan student movement made a mistake when it allowed the opportunity to pass without participating in the mechanism of university dialogue. This mechanism would have inevitably led to giving the university experience its true significance.

Thus, the university institutions have continued to be deprived of their student element. This has obstructed these institutions' meetings for years. Even when they managed to meet, they were deprived of the participation of a fundamental party which could have had an important role in the progress of these institutions.

This student situation has led to blocking the students' opportunities to project their financial and educational issues within an organized framework that allows them to be examined and tackled. If we add to this the crisis which the NFMS has been experiencing since its latest congress, and which has led to an organizational void in the student arena—a void exploited by the radical factions—then we understand how low the university has descended, considering that the majority of students take a spectator's stance toward serious developments that could lead to the collapse of the university if they go unchecked.

It is time for the student movement to reexamine its position, so as to create a climate that enables it to contribute to the university institutions effectively.

These institutions must, in turn, develop, in order to become compatible with the new realities of our universities. These facts are totally different from the facts prevalent when the 1975 decree, which regulated universities both quantitatively and qualitatively, was issued.

On the other hand, university inviolability does not mean, under any circumstances, that we should allow the university to become a theater for confrontations, clashes, and anarchy. University inviolability means that the university institution, headed by the university president, is the party that guards law and order within the university. The university president has the authority to enlist the help of the security forces, should the situation dictate it, to put an end to irresponsible and dangerous acts.

Islam 'Nonviolent'

92AF0233F Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 7

[Article by Dr. Mohamed Bouraja: "Islam Is Innocent of Violence"]

[Text] The use of violence in our universities in the past few days and years, and the adoption of violent means, without any checks or controls, to silence the word and to stifle freedom cannot receive any justification whatsoever from Islam. In Islam's tradition, violence is reprehensible. It is proscribed explicitly and implicitly, in word and in thought, regardless of the slogan under which this violence is practiced. Let the party that practices, adopts, or implements violence claim for itself whatever characteristics and honorific titles it wishes to claim, and let it dress itself in whatever garb it wishes, yet pork will remain pork and it will continue to be proscribed and objectionable. Regardless of what spices and oils are used to cook pork and how artistically it is cooked and presented, pork remains proscribed, and its flavor doesn't improve.

When Islam calls people to embrace it or to adhere to its rules and adorn themselves with its ethics and morals, it uses gentleness and kindness as its means. To address people and convey its message, Islam uses the means of calm dialogue and gentle argument, while expressing appreciation for and displaying love and humility toward the sought individual, and while avoiding anything that could displease the individual or cause him to be disgusted—"wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee" [Koran 3:159]. In preaching what it preaches, it is not Islam's objective to see those to whom it preaches capitulate and show the signs of responding to what is preached to them. Though this is the desired objective, it has behind it another objective that is no less significant or beneficial, namely, the reward and the merit the preacher will reap, even if he doesn't manage to touch something good in the heart of those preached. Right guidance comes from God and He, may He be praised, censures those who believe otherwise, saying: "Wilt thou then compel

mankind, against their will, to believe?" [Koran 10:99]. To remove this misconception from the preacher's mind, God says: "It is true thou wilt not be able to guide every one whom thou lovest; but God guides those whom He will" [Koran 28:56].

While it pursues this peaceful principle and embraces this pleasing method, and while it demonstrates the goodness it harbors and the evil that engulfs others, if Islam encounters nothing but deaf ears, blind eyes, and hearts wrapped in impediments, then it stops preaching so that it will not deviate from its traditional decency and good manners. It raises the slogan of wise justice—"O ye who believe, guard your own souls: If ye follow (right) guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who stray" [Koran 5:108]. Islam doesn't permit anybody to force anybody else to embrace it or to follow its tenets—"Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error" [Koran 2:256]. Moreover, Islam doesn't permit igniting the fires of sedition, hurting people, or taking away their lives so that they will embrace it. When Islam is assaulted and when evil tongues revile its sanctity, or when some of its followers rebel against it, Islam doesn't yell with those who yell:

"Let no one behave foolishly toward us, for we will behave more foolishly than they do!"

Islam doesn't empower all its followers to use violence and force to repel this assault or to eliminate the injustice done to Islam by those who rebel against it. Islam empowers only those who are entrusted with the responsibility for the faith to examine matters calmly and deliberately and to act in accordance with what they find in the rules of Islam and in the spirit of its law. If they do this, then they have performed their duty and absolved their conscience before their creator. Else, God will bring them to account, and He is in charge of all affairs. The common people are blameless if they remain silent. Rather, it is their duty to remain silent so that grave consequences will not develop.

Yes, Islam does condone violence and does advocate it openly and it does elevate the status of those who undertake violence, but only in the case of legitimate jihad and permissible war—"Smite ye above their necks and smite all their fingertips off them" [Koran 8:12] and "against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror (into the hearts of) the enemies of God and your enemies" [Koran 8:60].

Those who are jealous for Islam and those who are eager to elevate Islam's word should have done all that is in their power to go to Iraq when it was screaming and pleading for help against America's bombs and inferno. That was a difficult test in which all those croaking in the East and West were the losers, and before which all the trumpets, whether earthly or divine, were exposed. Will we not be ashamed of our real situation, and will we not learn a lesson from what has happened to us? Will we not

begin uniting our ranks and restoring love to our hearts? Perhaps then, we will be united against our enemies someday in the future.

Now, we have Palestine before us. Its religion is expelled and vanquished, its honor violated, and its soil usurped and plundered. What have we done for it? The reality attests that we are rarely concerned with Palestine and that what is more important to us is to perpetuate this fabricated struggle that is based on: Right belongs to the strong; bread to the surfeited; the word to him who holds the stick; the world to the victor; and the present is the same as the past.

Islam also condones violence from those who are capable of it against those who want them to swerve from Islam; to antagonize it with word or deed; or to commit great sins, such as adultery, inflicting harm on people, and so forth. "If, then, anyone transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him" [Koran 2:194].

Moreover, Islam permits the use of violence only in the case of self-defense or in defense of one's property. If a man is subjected to an attack aimed at taking his life or at usurping and plundering his property, then he may use violence if he so wishes and if he is capable of it. He can also surrender from the beginning and trust the affair to his God, as Adam and 'Uthman, may God be pleased with him, did.

In any case, except for the above-mentioned, Islam is innocent of violence. Islam distances itself from force and steers clear off uncouthness and harshness. It advocates equal dialogue based on gentleness and kindness. God's apostle, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, says: "God is gentle and He loves gentleness. He gives to gentleness what He doesn't give to violence." Nothing but misguidance lies beyond right.

Religious Leader

92AF0233G Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 16 Nov 91 p 7

[Article by Abdelaziz Ben Siddiq: "If Violence Is To Counter Political Ideas That Swerve From Religion, Dialogue and Gentle Means Should Be Adopted Instead"]

[Text] If violence is necessary to counter interpretive opinions that are far from the well-known Islamic religious tenets, then one is entitled to use it. Defending the Islamic faith is the dearest thing for which the individual or the group can sacrifice their life or their money. If a person is confronted with assault on his religion, then he is entitled to defend it with all his power. But if the thing to be confronted is political ideas that swerve from religion, then dialogue and gentle means should be adopted instead.

What happened at the university today is—according to what we have heard repeatedly—that Muslims were

confronted with defamation of the apostle, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, of the Islamic faith, and of the Koran. So they had the right to defend themselves on this front with all their power. This right is, by necessity, well-known in Islam and it is indisputable.

If the ulema are sincere, as they allege, and if they perform the role God has entrusted to them, namely to protect the faith before anything else, then they must demonstrate this sincerity and advise the nation that it is not permissible to defame the faith and that no Muslim is allowed to defame his religion and faith.

As for the government, especially the protector of the faith and the religion, he must prohibit and ban irrevocably defamation of the Islamic faith. Nobody may defame Islam and the Islamic faith, because the Moroccan constitution states that the Moroccan nation is a Muslim nation and that Islam is sacred.

While making my statement on the disturbances experienced recently by the Moroccan university, I only express the rule of Islam and speak of what Islam requires of every Muslim. The four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) proclaim this and require the ruler of the Muslims to be the first to safeguard the Islamic faith and to prevent its defamation.

But if the confrontation is over a political issue connected with positive laws, curricula, and so forth, then dialogue should prevail in this case and violence should be stopped.

On the other hand, parents who are certain that their children defame Islam and revile the apostle must disavow these children, and must not help or assist them at all until they repent, because God says in His book: "Thou wilt not find any people who believe in God and the Last Day loving those who resist God and His apostle, even though they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. For such He has written faith in their hearts" [Koran 22:58].

I add that if a married man expresses and pronounces such defamation, then his wife shall no longer be his wife and he may no longer lay with her. She shall be prohibited from making herself available to him because he is a traitor, and a traitor may not lay with a Muslim woman. This is Islam's rule and it is stated in all the Islamic books. Whoever pronounces the opposite is a hypocrite or a liar.

I have read some newspaper articles by some people who claim to be ulema and who have discussed the university disturbances, citing God's words: "Let there be no compulsion in religion" [Koran 2:256]. What they mean is that we may tolerate atheists who offend our religion and may hold dialogue with them. This shows ignorance by these ulema of what God's words, may God be praised and exalted, mean. God's words "let there be no compulsion in religion" pertain to the Christian or the Jew who come under Muslim rule and who are given protection. We may not compel them to embrace Islam as long

as they respect Muslim rites in the Islamic state, and as long as they do not offend Islam. As for the Muslim born to Muslim parents, no dialogue may be held with him if he breaks away from Islam. Rather, it is unanimous that such a Muslim must be killed because the apostle, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, says: "If a Muslim changes his religion, kill him."

Conditions at Mohammed V Hospital Criticized

92AF0273D Rabat L'OPINION in French
26 Dec 91 p 4

[Editorial by Driss Hanbali "A Rapidly Aging Hospital"]

[Text] The Mohammed V Hospital is a public institution beset by many problems, the most important of them being emergency care and the conditions in which patients are hospitalized.

With regard to emergency care, the first remark to be made is that the hospital has never had a true emergency department, instead its doctors are asked to work on call with the means at hand.

The inadequacy of the hospital's means and equipment, in addition to its saturation, have prevented its emergency services from evolving beyond the stage of doctors working on call from day-to-day, fighting to keep up with demand.

With regard to in-patient care, there is no escaping the fact that conditions at the Mohammed V Hospital are limited. Hospitalized patients often complain of poor living conditions.

Most of their complaints relate to poor hygiene, aging facilities, the poor quality of food, and small rooms.

It cannot be denied that the Mohammed V Hospital—the largest hospital in El-Jadida province and whose administration and medical and para-medical personnel must make do as best they can—has too many patients and is watching the quality of its services deteriorate. We hope that an energetic therapy (to use the appropriate term) will be adopted in the short- and long-run to restore the citizens' faith in the hospital.

Wafabank Describes Expanding Operations

92AF0223A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Dec 91 p 11

[Interview with Ali Kettani, President of Wafabank, and Abdelhak Bennani, General Director of Wafabank; by Talhah Jabril and Muna al-Bustani, place and date not given]

[Text] The Moroccan Wafabank has grown rapidly in recent times, moving ahead in a relatively short time from a bank engaging in conventional activity based on taking in deposits and granting loans, to a financial group growing on the basis of a strategy for branching

out into the financial services market by founding specialized institutions. Thus, the Wafabank group has helped to set up a Moroccan market for a number of new businesses for banks, especially through Wafa Investment, Wafa Information, and Wafa Trade companies. After building its Moroccan bases, the group has now turned to opening up its capital to new foreign partners, globalizing activities by opening branches and offices abroad, and exporting its services.

Wafabank is the second largest private bank in Morocco, and the Wafabank group is considered the financial wing of the SOBAR holding company, owned by the Kettani family. It is counted among the most important large private groups in Morocco. In an interview intended to shed light on the group's circumstances and its strategies, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT met with Ali Kettani, president and appointed member of the SOBAR holding company and Wafabank, in a wide-ranging interview touching on various aspects of the growth experienced by the Wafabank group in light of changes the Moroccan economy is going through, especially in the financial sector; in light of plans to set up an international financial zone in Tangier; and in conducting the privatization process.

Vice President and Managing Director of Wafabank Abdelhak Bennani took part in much of the interview. He specifically covered Wafabank's plan in the financial field and the area of specialized services through specialized firms.

What follows is our interview:

[Jabri] SOBAR Holding Company is considered the major participant in Wafabank's capital. What is the structure of SOBAR, and what role does it play in managing and planning the group's investments in Wafabank?

[Kettani] SOBAR is a holding company which directs its participation in a number of economic sectors. Its activities are spread over the banking, financial, industrial, real estate, and agricultural areas, plus the fields of land and sea transportation and others. It controls about 30 companies employing about 10,000 people, and has effected transactions worth \$300 million. The textiles sector was the real seed that grew and developed, from which SOBAR sprang. We directed our attention to taking part in developing the Morocco of the future. In 1957, we founded a large textile and furniture upholstery unit in Casablanca, and called it "Manatex," and two units in Fes, one of them "Cofitex," with government participation, specializing in yarn; and the other, "Tiscanor," specializing in fabric. In 1968, SOBAR broke into finance via its participation in a significant share in the capital of CICB [Compagnie Marocaine de Credit et de Banque], which is now known as Wafabank. That was done jointly, with one of the largest French financial groups, the Suez Financial Group, which took an 18 percent share in the bank's capital.

Wafabank is current pursuing a development strategy driven by the will to advance and modernize, after the restructuring of the 1970s. Its modernization in the 1980s was especially notable for adopting a new name and building a new headquarters to reflect its rapid development and ambitions.

[Jabri] What is Wafabank's place within Morocco's financial market? What is the number of its transactions, and its profits?

[Kettani] Wafabank is considered the second most important private bank in Morocco, and the fourth bank if we take into consideration the other types of banks. In the past year, this bank has achieved net after-tax profits of nearly 102 million Moroccan dirhams (\$11.33 million). We expect to achieve net profits of about 132 million dirhams (\$14.66 million) after taxes at the end of the current year.

Wafabank's share of the Moroccan financial market is estimated at about 11 percent of loans and 10 percent of deposits, but a better indicator than these figures of our place in the banking sector is that Wafabank was able to double its share of the market over the past 15 years, despite adverse conditions such as restricted bank lending and the fact that its yield in that long period never dipped below 2 percent of private funds.

This year, which is the first year of lifting bank lending restrictions, our loans granted to customers grew more than 50 percent, a rate higher than that of the banking system as a whole. Our deposits rose at a rate higher than that of the market.

Finally, the number of our transactions will reach—by the end of the current year—about a billion dirhams (\$111 million), all of which makes clear that Wafabank is not only a principle factor in the Moroccan banking system, but also qualified to develop more within the local market and the European banking market, in which we have some important projects.

[Jabri] Those figures make it clear that Wafabank will realize, in the current year characterized by the cancellation of lending restrictions, more favorable results than the preceding year. Has the reform of the Moroccan banking system given a bigger push to financial activity in general?

[Kettani] The Moroccan banking system was, of course, in need of the reforms that have begun to take effect. The restrictions on lending (what is known as the loan deferment system) led to a freeze in conditions and available market shares. The only benefit from that system, if one may speak of benefits, was that it made it easy for the monetary regulatory authorities to develop the regulatory bloc. But the manner of restricting loans transcends time, relatively, when we compare it with the more precise and secure instruments now current among the financial and monetary authorities in the West.

Fortunately, the Bank of Morocco (the central bank) decided to stop intervening in lending, to affecting liquidity, the level of interest rates, and the automatic financing of the banking system. These means, of course, are not neutral in the view of the banks' operations and revenues, but the banks must be capable of adapting to these limitations and of taking them into consideration, bearing in mind that the higher interests of all the banks and every economy: protecting the currency and the depositors, and spurring production.

Free Market Project in Tangier

[Jabril] The reform of the banking system in Morocco coincides with the establishment of an international financial zone in Tangier. Will the settling of foreign banks and financial institutions in this zone have negative repercussions, in the medium term, on Moroccan commercial banks? Has the Moroccan financial system become mature enough to be able to compete globally?

[Kettani] The agreement on the legislation, especially relating to taxation, will lead, within the European Economic Community, to a horizon of preparing the unified market, to spreading the advantages that had been limited to off-shore areas—or what are also called "European tax havens." On the other hand, since the outbreak of the Lebanese crisis, there has been a void to be filled in the Arab world in terms of commerce and free banks, which will give the Moroccan dynamic and the creation of a common Maghreb market, a practical opportunity in this regard. Finally, the geographical setting of Morocco, of Tangier specifically, at the meeting point of Europe, Africa, and the Arab world, is an inarguable advantage. With all these factors to start from, I think that there are promising possibilities for developing the off-shore commercial and financial sectors in Morocco, provided that the logistics are feasible, especially in terms of communications systems. These are being readied now. Also, on condition that the Moroccan administration advances an effective means of developing the free zones.

I do not see any negative effects of offshore banks on Moroccan commercial banks. On the contrary, I see benefits in it. In the free financial zone, the banks will deal only in hard-currency operations, while Moroccan banking activity deals mostly in dirham operations. Plus, Moroccan banks will benefit from these zones, since they will be able to establish themselves in them directly or through their branches, to develop hard currency operations.

Foreign Competition

With regard to global competition in its broad sense, one may deduce the answer from the question by analyzing the operations of large foreign banks that have established themselves directly in Morocco and have not succeeded whatsoever in bothering the Moroccan banks. Their growth was limited, which can be attributed to several causes: the foreign banks did not at all invest

resources with the importance Moroccan that banks did. Most of the time, they were busy with priorities outside Morocco. Also, banking is a business that cannot be exported as easily as a car or some other product is exported. It is a business that requires a deep knowledge of the economic setting and market conditions, and in addition to those two things, Moroccan banks are more efficient. Today they have reached a level of excellence and service that may be compared to precisely the same levels as those attained by foreign banks.

Branch and Privatization Strategy

[Jabril] What are the general lines for developing the Wafabank group? Do you have definite plans for the short and medium terms?

[Kettani] Wafabank began, some time back, to implement a wide-ranging development strategy. The goals of that strategy include, specifically, modernizing the bank at all levels. Implementing this strategy has allowed the gradual creation of a financial group in the true sense of the word. Wafabank now boasts a well-organized set of branches specializing in finance and services.

Our group is a project, and is also, specifically, a team made up of 1,790 people, 450 of whom are technicians who represent an important asset at the level of management and guidance. What sets our group apart is the will to go forward. I believe that advancement is a strength relevant to production and sales. We in the Wafabank group want to use all our resources to help increase the productive capacity of our country, to strengthen our chances for success. Specifically, we have concentrated on every profession that its organization and team can handle.

We have worked at developing a variety of services in financial and related fields to benefit consumers and end-users, made up of a financial "supermarket" with individuals and companies in the same place, and with the same guarantees of excellence and competitiveness; the widest variety of financial services. This goes beyond the relatively recent concept of "bank-insurer" in Europe. I would like to point out that the broad scope of our group is, as far as I know, relatively unique in Morocco, if not absolutely unique.

We have tried to develop new products and activities in Morocco. I may convey some examples of this direction with our specialized companies, such as Wafa Investment, Wafa Trade, Wafa Information, and Wafabanks' al-Ri'ayah establishments.

Labor Bank Activity

Wafa Investment was established about ten years ago and tried to explore the difficult paths to modern-era businesses in our country, which are the businesses of the labor bank. In Morocco, Wafa Investment pursues its activities as a labor bank. It assists projects which lack funding for the structure of its financing or mobilizing additional supplies. It engages in financial engineering

activity, and has begun to develop, in Morocco, one financial engineering area: merger and acquisition of companies. Wafa Investment has clearly succeeded in another area of financial engineering, which is saving and reviving troubled companies. Our organization was able to set up a program to save more than 15 industrial firms. We have practically created a market in Morocco for this new service, which which clients previously were unused to.

Wafa Investment also plays a developmental role in the initiative of setting up and implementing industrial and real estate projects, and joining with local or foreign investors, private or public.

Wafa Investment is concerned with assisting foreign investors in Morocco by offering consulting and advice for their projects, or making administrative contacts on their behalf and participating with them in their project capitals, if they so wish.

Interest in Saudi Market

And in the area of partnerships with Arab investors, I would like to point out our partnership with the Baraka Group, with which we have completed a number of projects, and add that we have decided to open a representative office for the Wafabank group in Jiddah. We intend, by establishing this office, to show businessmen in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf that there is an information office that can acquaint them with investment opportunities in Morocco, and to offer them the services of Wafa Investment. The office is also intended to boost Moroccan exports to the Gulf region, to offer services to the Gulf Arabs who take vacations in Morocco, and also to provide its services to Moroccans who travel to the Gulf, especially to Saudi Arabia for the greater and lesser pilgrimages (hajj and 'umrah).

Besides Wafa Investment, we founded, four years ago, another specialized company, Wafa Information, which specializes in advisory activity in the management field, particularly computer programming and applications (information).

In the Arab world, the activity of administrative management services and restructuring is nearly gone, and in Morocco, you practically cannot find a company in this field, which has had such important growth in the West. We have started out in this new business in its most important aspect, in our view, which is engineering and information services.

Wafa Information has become the most important firm of its kind in Africa and the Arab world.

The company's ambitions are not confined to serving the local market at reasonable prices. It goes beyond that, to exporting its services abroad. It now has 200 employees, most of them engineers, and the capabilities of the Moroccan engineers qualify them to export their services through Wafa Information to the global market, with advanced competitive strength. Our company has

proved its ability to pursue this new business. For example, we advertise the fact that it helped to provide the royal police with a fine advanced information system, cooperating in this area with the Algerian External Bank, which is the first Algerian and African bank to set up a new information system on more modern and efficient bases. The Wafa Information company will seek to extend its activity to other areas, to administrative guidance, since it has started in the more difficult field of information organization.

Setting Foot in the American Market

In the context of the same direction—establishing a specialized company for every business or service group—we recently established Wafa Trade, which will aim to assist and support Moroccan firms in the area of foreign marketing.

This company will have its headquarters in the Tangier free zone, and Wafa Trade will have several companies as its branches. For example, there is Meditrade Co., which was founded in partnership with the Credit Populaire d'Algerie. We gave it the task of developing commercial exchange among the Maghreb countries, particularly between Morocco and Algeria.

We also founded "Finabro Inc.," to engage in simplifying funding for Moroccan contractors locally or abroad, especially the smaller and medium-sized contractors. We also founded "Soframad" with the French firm "Bromodis" to facilitate funding for Moroccan merchants in France. We recently founded another subsidiary of Wafa Trade with businessmen from the agricultural sector, [called] Traditional Carpets. Its headquarters will be in the United States, where it will be active in reviving agricultural exports from Morocco to the American market.

On the principle of founding a company for every business, we have also founded al-Ri'ayah for Wafabank, to encourage educated and technical Moroccans to develop their production.

These examples illustrate that we have worked at supporting production activities at every possible level, at all levels where we are able to get involved. By this, I mean granting automatic funds and financial engineering through Wafa Investment; distributing funding formulas and various appropriate loans through Wafabank; the leasing firm Wafa Bail; Wafa Loan; and Wafa Real Estate; developing savings in its various forms through Wafabank and Wafa Insurance; protecting property and business equipment through Wafa Insurance; offering guidance, organization, and administration services through Wafa Information; providing commercial services through Wafa Trade; and encouraging cultural and athletic activities through Wafabank's al-Ri'ayah establishment.

International Banking Activity

[Jabril] What is the extent of Wafabank's network abroad? Who are the most important partners and correspondents on the international level?

[Kettani] Wafabank reserves a significant part of its resources for international activity, with the aim of supporting the companies in their international trading activity, encouraging foreign investments in Morocco, and serving the Moroccan communities residing in Europe and the Arab countries.

In this direction, we have developed a network of representative offices distributed throughout Europe, the Maghreb countries, and the Gulf states. We have opened offices in Algeria and Abu Dhabi, and will soon establish an office in Jiddah and another in Tripoli. In Brussels, we just have a bank branch with an agency in Antwerp.

We have a plan to open a branch in Paris and about six agencies throughout France within the coming year. A number of companies, now considered Wafabank branches, will be internationalized.

To answer the second part of your question, our network of correspondents covers practically all the major areas of the world: Europe, the Maghreb, the Middle East, and North America. Our relationship with some of our correspondents goes beyond banking business to partnership. The Suez Group, for example, which participated in Wafabank's capital, has also taken subscriptions in some of our group's branches, of which I might mention its participation through "Sofinco," one of the leading consumer lenders in France, in our Wafa Loan branch; through "Hanin Inc.," which became a partner of our Wafa Real Estate branches in the area of real estate investment development; and through Lucas France Inc. with our Wafa Bail establishment, in the area of leasing. We have formed excellent ties of cooperation in various areas with Arab banks, particularly Moroccan ones. In this, I may point to the growth of our cooperation with the Baraka group and our cooperation with a large Algerian bank, with whom we founded the Meditrade company belonging to the Wafa Trade company. Our Wafa Information branch signed partnership agreements with the Banque Exterieur d'Algerie and the Mauritanian Bank for International Trade.

Reasons for Visiting Soviet Union

[Jabril] A Wafabank delegation recently visited the Soviet Union. What did the group have in mind for this visit, and what were the results?

[Kettani] A high-level delegation from Wafabank did, indeed, visit Moscow. Its mission was to gather the necessary information to acquaint ourselves with the atmosphere and to grasp the new legislative and organizational context, as well as to get study activities in the area of foreign trade.

On the other hand, the delegation was trying to create an alternative way to deal with the problems of performance, which hinder those engaged in trading with the Soviets.

What actually came out of this visit was the signing of three agreements. The first agreement is financial, and was concluded with the Russian bank for foreign trade; the second was commercial and was concluded with a company specializing in barter trade. The third was with a service company whose task it will be to provide us with information on opportunities for exchange and our representation at all levels on an ongoing basis.

With these three agreements, we are confident of our ability to participate in revitalizing exchanges and breaking into an important export market.

Since that time, the Soviet Union has gone through great changes. We are following them closely, but we reaffirm our wish to develop trade with that part of the world, irrespective of the political formula that prevails there.

SOBAR and the Privatization Process

[Jabril] It is remarkable that some of the presidents and owners of the larger private corporations, among them the SOBAR Group, whose financial wing Wafabank represents, are on the Privatization Committee to supervise the transfer of 112 Moroccan firms from public sector ownership to the private sector. The privatization law prohibited committee members from taking part in the purchase of those establishments. Does this mean that the larger private groups will not benefit from the privatization process, or perhaps will benefit through the companies' participation in the purchase process?

[Kettani] My membership in the Privatization Committee actually means that the SOBAR Group, in accordance with the privatization law, will not be able to purchase government shares in a number of the Moroccan firms that will be sold to the private sector. What is sought from the privatization process is an opportunity to a new generation and a new class to participate in production. But this new class, which we want to have a part in privatization, does not possess sufficient financial capabilities. Here, we come to the important role of the banks and financial firms. It may have been easy to privatize small-scale public companies while honoring the basic ideas of the privatization law, but it will be harder when it is a question of large public-sector companies. We in Wafabank are ready to help, should there be clients interested in the privatization of a given company. If their financial capability is insufficient for the demands of the operation, we can help them by taking a share of the company offered for privatization. But we cannot become a competitor to our clients, or a major party in the operation or in privatizing. Our role will be limited to accompanying funding. As for the legal aspect: Have we, in this case, an accompanying ability for the client through Wafabank or the Wafa Investment Company in the company capital to be privatized? In my opinion, there is nothing to prevent it

Is the Era of Families Over?

[Jabril] The Moroccan minister of external trade, Hassan Abouyoub, recently said that the family structure of the major firms in Morocco has become an obstacle to developing them, and to developing relationships with their international partners. He said that the time has come to move beyond the family character of Moroccan capital. As president of the SOBAR group, one of the largest family groups in Morocco, how to you see this issue?

[Kettani] When we wanted to participate in developing the Moroccan economy at the start of independence, it was hard for us to find someone who would share our efforts with us. It was a necessary sacrifice, and we took part in building up family capital to develop our country's economy.

We are extremely open. We are presently about to make an important increase in Wafabank's capital of between \$50-100 million, and for that we'll be open to our new partners as capital stockholders. It's tied, in particular, to two large banks, one Italian and the other Spanish. We will also see the possibility of an Arab financial institution getting into the capitalization, and this opening will also include the domestic market, because Wafabank is on the stock exchange.

But that does not mean that we'll abandon the Moroccan character of the bank, the running of the bank, or control over it. Every company must be independently run. The independent leadership has given the sign of its neutrality, and there does not have to be any similarity between the stockholders' interests and those of the institution. As to family character, the history of the industrial concept in the Western countries makes it clear that in the beginning, every company had a family character, and the family aspect still distinguishes many firms in Europe and America. The really large firms did not keep their family character, of course. Here I must bring in the role of the stock exchanges in those countries in giving opportunities to popular capital.

Here, we are going in the same direction, particularly as the financial authorities are preparing to activate the role of the financial stock exchange.

Fish Export Figures for 1991 Reported

92AF0273A Rabat ALMAGHRIB in French
31 Dec 91 p 5

[Text] Fishing activities in Morocco performed well in 1991 as a source of foreign exchange, bringing in some 500 million dollars (4 billion dirhams), according to an official source in Rabat.

During the first half of 1991 alone, 82,986 metric tons of fish were exported, even though exports of fresh fish totalled only 23,035 metric tons, as compared with 29,722 metric tons in the first half of 1990.

The largest increase in value (28 percent) occurred in canned fish. Exports of canned fish totalled 20,487 metric tons worth 460,092,000 dirhams. Exports of fish oil and blubber, in contrast, were nonexistent in the first half of 1991.

The opposite phenomenon occurred in exports of fish flours and meals, which went from nonexistent in the first half of 1990 to 3,600 metric tons in the first half of 1991, for a value of 11,426,000 dirhams.

Exports of shellfish turned in the best performance of all, totalling 35,436 metric tons, worth more than 1 billion dirhams, an increase of 32.7 percent.

SAUDI ARABIA**Al-Qusaybi Book Counsels Gulf Dialogue**

92AE0147A Al-Shariqah AL-KHALIJ in Arabic
6 Dec 91 p 11

[Review by Kamal al-Dhib of Ghazi al-Qusaybi's book "The Gulf Crisis: An Attempt To Understand"]

[Text] Manama—Even while writing a thorough study of the Gulf crisis, the Saudi poet Ghazi al-Qusaybi did not abandon poetry. He has headed each chapter of his new book published this week by Dar al-Saqi [publishing house] in Beirut, with a verse by al-Mutanabbi as an emblem or subtitle.

The new book, entitled "The Gulf Crisis: An Attempt To Understand," is of medium length (200 pages) and is divided into the following eight chapters: "The Decision," "The Storm," "The Coalition and the Countercoalition," "Fireworks in the Air," "And the Heirs Came," "The Hideous Bedouin and the Ugly Arab," "American Conspiracy or New World Order," and "The Future: Dialogue or Explosion?"

As can be seen, the book's structure emphasizes that it is really an attempt to understand—to understand the recent Gulf war's causes, roots, interactions, dimensions, conclusions, and aftermath.

The book is also a call for dialogue, comprehension, and understanding—for comprehension of what happened and understanding of the disaster in its historic and international dimensions.

The writer prefaces the first chapter with the words of al-Mutanabbi: "Whoever can seek a thing by combat and coercion, does not arrange to get it by begging." Al-Qusaybi states that the decisionmaking process for the ruling regime in Iraq is extremely complicated. It is related, first of all, to the psychological profile of Saddam Husayn, who has leaned toward the spirit of adventurism since his childhood and youth. The writer adds that Saddam's life has constantly been so linked to the spirit of adventurism that we can say that behind every turning-point decision was an adventure. The writer discusses these turning points, from the adventure

of gaining power, to the Iraq-Iran war. Al-Qusaybi considers the results of that war to have been the prelude to the Kuwait invasion, as it bankrupted the Iraqi treasury and led to a failure to achieve the war's announced objectives. "Saddam Husayn could neither extend Iraqi sovereignty over the entire Shatt al-'Arab, nor change the Iranian regime threatening his regime. The Arab nation did not recognize Iraq's role in protecting its eastern gate, and the Gulf did not stand with him as he wished with lives and wealth, bases and alliances. Iraq emerged burdened by debts of \$80 million and with an army in excess of 1 million men, whom the exhausted Iraqi economy could not absorb into civilian jobs."

At the same time, "Kuwait appeared to be more than an easy prey. Kuwait had no armed forces that could resist, even temporarily and symbolically. No security treaty linked Kuwait to the United States. Saddam Husayn inferred from the internal political situation in Kuwait that he would be received there with a great welcome—at least from the opposition."

Next, al-Qusaybi indicates that, although Saddam is a first-rate tactical maneuverer, he is a man who does not rely on any strategic vision. His knowledge of the international landscape is very weak, and his political culture utterly shallow. The writer adduces many examples of this and considers them a prelude to Saddam's ignorance of the new international reality and the subsequent error of his calculations in overall outline and specific details. Al-Qusaybi says that proof of this is Saddam's belief that the worst American position against him might be "a reprisal air raid, Carter-like measures that would stop short of a boycott, or Reagan-like measures that would not go beyond sending ships. He was quite ready to confront reactions of this sort."

Second Mistake

That was Saddam's first mistake. The second, according to the author of "The Gulf Crisis: An Attempt To Understand," was that Saddam misunderstood the personality of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, despite the close relations linking him to the king. Saddam noted that, even at the height of the Iranian tide, King Fahd had firmly refused to give the United States any bases or facilities on Saudi territory.

The writer adds: "Those who know the Saudi monarch first-hand know that he is peaceful. He is ready to go as far as possible to spare his country the woes of wars and crises. He avoids difficult and painful decisions as much as possible."

On the basis of the foregoing considerations, Saddam believed that the kingdom would not allow its lands to be turned into a battlefield under any circumstances. The writer then explores Saddam's third mistake, which was his misunderstanding and misassessment of the changes in the Soviet Union.

For example, he did not understand that the Soviet Union, during this period, was in need of American

funds and food, and was therefore not prepared to back Saddam Husayn's adventure in Kuwait. "Gorbachev was convinced that the success of his reform program depended upon effective cooperation with the Western camp, led by the United States."

All these influences flowed into Saddam's mind. Three errors thus led him to the adventure: miscalculating the American position, miscalculating the Soviet position, and miscalculating the Saudi position. Thus, his adventurism led him to the memorable disaster.

Critical Moments

In the second chapter, al-Qusaybi has tried to monitor the critical moments in the course of the Gulf crisis: the entry into Kuwait, the siege, the Arab condemnation decision, the division, the calling on foreign and Arab forces for aid, and the decision on [Operation Desert] Storm.

The writer has devoted the third chapter to a study of the formation of the coalitions and countercoalitions, especially those that took Saddam Husayn's side. Briefly, al-Qusaybi's explanation of the coalitions that sided with Saddam is that those who apparently or actually stood by him were primarily siding with themselves. The Palestinians wanted to exploit the Kuwait crisis to link it with the Palestinian issue. The Islamists wanted to ride the wave of popular opinion and exploit it to reach power. The political regimes had a pressing need to go along with public opinion because they suffered from weakness—and so forth.

Al-Qusaybi has devoted the fourth chapter to a study of the media "fireworks," or the problem of information and counterinformation. It is an engaging study, because it focuses on analyzing the slogans and counterslogans, the patriotic songs, statements, panels, and so forth broadcast over the air.

Fundamentalists' Position

In the fifth chapter, the writer has turned his attention to the phenomenon of fundamentalism and the fundamentalists' position on the Gulf crisis. He holds the fundamentalist leaders responsible for sliding into error. He accuses them of opportunism and of lust for power at any price.

The sixth chapter is devoted to the problem of Gulf wealth and the image of ugly Gulf Arabs that has spread in the West and East, overcoming prevailing images, increasing hostility toward them, and sometimes causing reprisals against them. The writer attempts to reply to these images, which he considers false.

The seventh chapter is entirely devoted to answering a single crucial question: Was the Gulf crisis an American conspiracy or a new world order?

The final chapter of the book is by far the most important, because the writer has devoted it to the problems of dialogue and explosion. He means by this, the problems

of democracy and social violence in the Arab world. "If dialogue alone is the alternative to an explosion within each Arab state, dialogue alone is also the alternative to tension in relations between the Arab states. The only slogan even more dangerous than 'May God forgive bygones,' in these circumstances is the slogan, 'May God not forgive bygones.'"

The first slogan means that we have not learned a single lesson from the crisis. The second slogan means that the Arab nation will remain a prisoner of the crisis forever. What is required is that we understand how what happened happened, and how it is possible for it not to recur. The only way to such knowledge is dialogue. Dialogue, according to al-Qusaybi, must start from a firm basis: acceptance of the state as a principal fact, indeed, the principal fact in Arab reality.

Islamic Bank Aids Former Soviet Republics

92AE0192C Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 1 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by 'Uqayl al-'Anzi: "Islamic Development Bank Offers Aid to Islamic Republics in Caucasia"]

[Text] Dr. Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali, president of the Islamic Development Bank, stated that the bank has decided to give aid to the Islamic republics in what was formerly known as the Soviet Union, to finance their projects.

In a lecture he gave two evenings ago at the King Faysal Center for Islamic Studies and Research, he indicated that these projects include the rebuilding of Islamic schools, and training schools for Islamic theology and Arab-language instructors, in addition to agricultural projects aimed at raising the economic standard of these republics.

He added that in order to save time and money, the bank planned to buy prefabricated buildings that are offered on the market at reasonable prices. He also indicated that the bank had, in fact, started to send delegations to these republics and work on these projects, which will be turned over to the local Islamic associations upon completion and which will commence in the next few days.

Dr. Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali pointed out that the bank was considering a plan to set up an export credit guarantee program, already approved by the bank's board of directors, to be put into effect in the next few months. With regard to the amounts that the bank's executive directors have earmarked for development projects, business transactions, the bank's Islamic portfolio, and special aid, Dr. Ahmad indicated that, as of the end of [the Hijra calendar month of] Rabi' al-Thani [6 November 1991], close to \$11 billion had been spent on 1,450 projects and transactions in 42 member countries, with priority given to economic projects that fall under the agricultural and food-security sectors, due to their special importance.

About the accomplishments of the longer-term trade financing program, which was put into operation four years ago view to promote trade among the members of the Islamic Conference Organization, Dr. Ahmad stated that, as of the end of last Rabi' al-Thani [6 November 1991], 71 export transactions had been approved for the benefit of nine of its participants at a total cost of \$149 million. He also reviewed the technical assistance that the bank offers in support of project financing, providing consulting services, paperwork for bids, and the purchase of necessary equipment for research and training, saying that the bank had appropriated \$105.75 million for technical aid for the period between 1977 and 6 November 1991. This amount includes \$25.591 million in non-refundable grants and \$53.152 million in loans for 1,072 technical aid transactions in 31 member countries. In answer to questions raised by an attendee about how to cope with the dearth of trade information that restricts economic cooperation among the Islamic countries, Dr. Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali said the bank had arrived at a partial solution to this problem by setting up its own information center, and will make the necessary information available to member-country businessmen and push economic and trade cooperation forward.

Funds, Food Donated to Afghan Refugees

92AE0159A Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic
29 Dec 91 pp 1,20

[Article: "Prince Salman Receives Million-Riyal Donation for Mujahidin"]

[Text] His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abdallah, the governor of Riyadh who heads the General Organization for Donations to the Afghan Mujahidin, received a check for one million Saudi riyals as a donation to the Mujahidin from Muhammad al-'Abdallah al-Jumayh of the 'Abd-al-'Aziz and Muhammad al-'Abdallah al-Jumayh Company.

His royal highness expressed his thanks and appreciation to Muhammad al-'Abdallah al-Jumayh for this nice gesture.

Furthermore, His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz sent two letters to 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Juraysi, owner of Bayt al-Riyadh (al-Juraysi) Corporation, for his continued support of the organization in the form of furniture and equipment; and to Nasir al-Tayyar, director of the al-Tayyar World Transportation Agency, for transporting five tons of dates to the Afghan Mujahidin and refugees.

On this occasion, his highness urged all philanthropists to help alleviate the suffering of the Afghan elderly, widows, disabled persons, and orphans living in refugee camps; and to help the Mujahidin, who are going through a critical stage in the struggle.

Water Projects To Serve 380 Cities, Villages

92AE0159B Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 29 Dec 91 p 1

[Article by Khalid al-'Uwayd: "340 New Potable Water Projects To Serve 380 Cities, Villages in Eastern, Central Areas for 182 Million Riyals"]

[Text] His Excellency Minister of Agriculture and Water Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shaykh agreed to award the bid for the administration, operation, and maintenance of a number of potable water projects for the southeastern and north central regions to two national companies, for a total sum of about 182 million Saudi riyals.

The value of the three-year contract for the administration, operation, and maintenance of the 132 potable water projects in the southeastern region is 87,994,280 riyals.

These projects will supply potable water to more than 150 cities and villages. As for the administration, operation, and maintenance contract for potable water projects in the north central region, it is worth 102,960,400 riyals for three years and includes 209 projects to supply potable water to more than 230 cities and villages.

Each of the aforementioned projects in both bids is composed of one or more wells with a pumping unit, underground and above-ground reservoirs, household water systems, animal watering holes, and cistern loading. The bid covers the operation and maintenance of pumps and the maintenance of water lines.

These new projects are part of the ministry's plan to supply potable water throughout the kingdom.

Merger, Takeover Pros, Cons Discussed

92AE0146A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Dec 91 p 10

[Article: "Saudi Firms Discuss Merger Issue"]

[Text] Riyadh, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—The private sector in Saudi Arabia, which is considered a Gulf economic entity in terms of content, assets, and opportunities, is about to embark on a new experiment that may speed the sector's movement into the age of large international economic entities.

It appears that, in many sectors, businessmen's convictions have begun to ripen about the idea of merging, although this has happened in varying degrees. The controlling factors have been the market and intense competition. Other factors include the need for funding and the transition to a period when international links will be created and be prominent within the lists of international economic names.

Due to the lack of real merger experience in Saudi economic life, the merger idea has not yet advanced beyond the stage of discussion and highlighting expected economic advantages.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry will organize an important forum on mergers in Saudi economic institutions, to be held at month's end under the patronage of Prince Mut'ib Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, minister of public works and housing. It will be devoted to the idea of mergers in a single sector, contracting, which is the sector most in need of organizational development based on the principle of large entities able to deal with unpropitious circumstances; also because this sector faces difficulties in the wake of reduced projects, intensified competition, and other changes imposed by the stage of equilibrium.

The idea for the forum was preceded by publication of the first guide of its kind prepared by the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce about mergers in the contracting sector, as the chamber's contribution to enriching the ongoing discussion of the subject.

To prepare for the forum, an auxiliary conference on the subject of mergers was held with the participation of a group of businessmen and economic personalities. They debated a number of ideas about appropriate choices to encourage the trend toward mergers and to overcome possible difficulties.

Among the focuses of the forum, a number of points of departure and priorities stood out concerning the importance and innumerable benefits of the merger idea. Muhammad Ibn-'Adwan stated that mergers have begun to attract great interest in the world today. The motives behind the trend are primarily economic, because it leads to resource rationalization. He called for serious thought about applying this trend in the contracting sector to rescue it from its trouble, before considering expanding the idea to other sectors.

He indicated that the Chamber [of Commerce] Contractors' Committee, which he supervises, has prepared thorough studies of all the economic and procedural aspects, the creation of a dynamic, and other questions related to overcoming the obstacles and difficulties confronting some phases of applying mergers. The committee has also carried on contacts and consultations with relevant government agencies and has sensed enthusiastic agreement and support for the idea. He said that these agencies have told the chamber of the need to find a mechanism to help the merger process, spread awareness of the project in businessmen's circles, and highlight its advantages.

Ibn-'Adwan thinks that one of the most important obstacles to the idea of mergers, from his point of view, is psychological. "Private projects in our country are usually based on individual ambition; they are connected with this individual's name, aspirations, personal temperament, and abilities. When such an individual decides to merge with others, he may feel that his

personal powers will diminish, and there are other aspects related to the person's name, his social status in the company, the family's name in the market, etc." Ibn-'Adwan therefore thinks that highlighting the immediate material gains from mergers could help dissolve this individual attitude.

Ibn-'Adwan recommended increased informational activity to educate the community on the subject of mergers and their many advantages. The many successful experiments in this area should be publicized, and the idea and concept of mergers should be simplified in clear and acceptable form.

'Abdallah al-Mu'allimi stated that the general points of departure and principles spurring the merger project are the same for the contracting sector and other sectors.

Al-Mu'allimi reviewed the story of the largest international experience with mergers—that which occurred in Japan and resulted in the birth of the largest automobile companies—Toyota, Nissan, and Mazda, which previously had been a series of small companies not strong enough to compete with American and European automobile companies.

He asked the Saudi private sector to learn a lesson from these experiences in order to forge ahead among large international corporations. However, he expressed the opinion that mere belief in the expected benefits of mergers might not be sufficient to implement the experiment, if the necessary vehicle is not created.

He asked the relevant agencies to create this vehicle. They should establish an entity able to set a collective future course. They should pave the way for the various companies and individuals, and remove the organizational, legal, and other obstacles.

Al-Mu'allimi advocated the principle of separating ownership and management. It is not desirable for an owner-director to know and decide every matter in his firm. Such a task is beyond the ability of most people. Even if the owner of the company is a person of great talent, native intelligence, and ability, and if his sons also possess the same powers, these things are not necessarily transferable or durable over the long run.

Engineer Nasir al-Mutawwi' said: "We rarely hear of this step being applied in developing countries, but we would like to help our society get over the period of hesitation in embracing the idea of mergers."

Al-Mutawwi' thinks that "the period in which we are living requires the existence of large entities that can be realized only by carefully founded expansion. Mergers are the best available options for achieving this now. Saudi Arabia's role and importance on the international stage demand powerful, effective, and organized entities that the state can use to provide its services to the international community and implement the grants, aid, and loans it provides to countries in the form of projects implemented by these companies."

He expressed the opinion that certain kinds of mergers in certain fields should be seen as a developmental and security goal. If large companies falter, then the national interest may require intervention for the purpose of merging, or taking emergency measures to save the situation.

Legal Framework

The forum dealt with legal aspects of the merger concept through the participation of Dr. Hasan al-Mala. He distinguished between two senses of the idea: merger and unification. Merger means that a company acquires the assets and liabilities of another company; the identity of the acquiring company remains, while the identity of the acquired company disappears. Unification takes place through the creation of an independent corporate entity into which the two companies are merged. The identity of both companies disappears, and a new company is born with a new commercial registration and legal existence.

He pointed out that the Saudi commercial system talks about mergers in these two senses, applying the term "merger" to the two concepts of merger and unification. This is contrary to the scientific and legal definition. The provisions stipulated in the law on mergers are considered so important that they allow a company under receivership to decide on a merger, even if it is under receivership, with the aim of preserving the company's identity and not harming the partners and caretakers of creditor and employee rights.

Al-Mala believes that the rules and principles in the Saudi commercial system are fully sufficient to pave the legal way for mergers without any sort of individual legal interpretations.

Government Incentives

One view that emerged in the forum advocated the creation of government incentives to encourage steps toward mergers. 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Isa espoused this view. "What benefit," he asked, "does Saudi law envisage or encourage from the merger of two Saudi companies? Is there a clear provision in the law expressing government encouragement or support for this trend? The merging company is registered as a new company; and as far as government classification of the company born from the merger is concerned, the history, past experience, and contributions of the two companies have no value."

Al-'Isa thinks that if mergers are a necessary, fundamental step at this stage, then the government should encourage them. It should pass certain laws and regulations promoting the trend and giving advantages to merging companies. Without this incentive factor, al-'Isa thinks that mergers may not bring benefit, and that people will be slow to become convinced.

The subject of incentives witnessed some disagreement. Some thought it necessary to create them, at least in the

initial stages. Others thought that mergers and the emergence of large entities could, of themselves, form an incentive. Mergers would take place because of the strength and position that the merged company would acquire and because it would obtain higher market shares. In this context, Hamad al-Hamidan thought that the formation of a legal climate and the creation of certain incentives in the initial stages of the experiment to create good examples of merged companies could promote a general trend toward the experiment. He thought that it would not be easy to mobilize opinion in favor of the view, and that great efforts would be needed to make it take root.

Local Model

The forum discussed an actual merger experience in the local community. Two pioneers in the experiment, Engineer 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Shithri and Engineer Basim al-Shihabi, participated in the discussion. They enriched the discussion by presenting the experience that had occurred in the area of engineering consulting firms.

Al-Shithri explained that the idea arose because they were two competing organizations with great similarity at the office level. They began to cooperate in implementing certain joint projects. The relationship then developed with the establishment of a joint office comprising a number of personnel of the two offices. Finally, they decided on the idea of merging.

Al-Shithri indicated that any person can feel a certain anxiety at first, especially if his experience with his own firm has involved years of effort and toil. He may feel that by choosing to merge, he will lose something dear and his personal freedom to make decisions. However, he and his colleague overcame this aspect by making reason and realistic thinking the judge and by assessing the tangible results obtained after the two firms united.

For his part, Basim al-Shihabi stated that the new office has achieved great successes: "We have achieved continuity, increased capacity, and the ability to compete better."

However, al-Shihabi thought that formulating merger as a goal might give a false impression of the idea. Merger is a means, not an end. The goal is to invigorate the market, raise companies' capability, and enable them to obtain jobs that they could not obtain without funding and higher capacities.

SUDAN

West Accused of Encouraging Secession

92AF0308C Khartoum SUNA in English 19 Dec 91 p 8

[Article: "Reports Bear Witness of Western Countries Hidden Persuasion of Separation: Army Spokesman"]

[Text] Khartoum, Dec. 19 (SUNA)—Director of the Moral Orientation Branch Maj. Gen. Mohamed Abdulla

Oweida, Armed Forces Spokesman stated that reports divulging from the western media and colonialist churches have confirmed the western countries move to convince rebel Garang and the dissidents to accept a proposal of S. Sudan secession with the necessity of reaching an accord between the two sides.

Maj. Gen. Oweida said in a press statement that the move comes in a time, when the National Salvation Revolution and the Armed Forces are exerting efforts to maintain the fair peace and halting bloodbath as the national church are working to heal the rift and attain peace.

The Army Spokesman explained the agreement stipulated that the two factions of the rebellion movement cooperate to wage military attacks on the Armed Forces and the Sudanese people.

Such, he added, seemed to be acceptable by the high ranking Kenyan circles under the pressure of the imperialist forces.

SPLA Juvenile Conscripts Trained in Cuba

92AF0253A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Jan 92 p 5

[Unattributed article: "SPLA Recruits Youngsters by Force"]

[Text] al-Nasir—Since the downfall of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia and the attendant exodus of Sudanese refugees from [Aynanj—possibly Itang] in May 1991, the issue of child-soldiers in the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has commanded great attention. Bernard Kouchner, the French minister of humanitarian action, said that he personally saw about 10,000 military recruits between the ages of six and 15 in a camp in Bushila. Furthermore, the visit of the French minister coincided with Eric Mashar's statement last August that the SPLA was, in fact, recruiting youngsters.

[Sudanese Popular Liberation] Movement founder Col. John Garang vehemently denied these charges, saying the problem is not a shortage of manpower, but one of arms. It seems that no one knew the truth, so [Emma Sharp] of the SUDAN MONITOR went to southern Sudan to investigate this matter:

"While sitting on a chair under one of the very few trees in the village of Yom Deng in the Sobat River basin in southern Sudan, I heard the following stories from the villagers there:

"The first villager recounted how 29 12-year-old youngsters were taken by force from the village in 1989, and their parents have not heard anything about them ever since. He also told me that he heard of youngsters being taken away from [Itang] in Ethiopia to Kapoeta for military training.

"Another villager told me that his 12-year-old son was also taken away when Garang went to the village chieftains asking for 10 children to be sent to school, and they had no choice, because soldiers would have taken them by force.

"Even the children of the Yum Dang village chieftain were taken away, and some women had to walk all the way to [Itang] looking for their children, but to no avail.

"Another person, by the name of Peter, who was listening to us told us his story, saying that 'my wife had gone to [Itang] looking for our son, only to find that he had been moved to Kapoeta, so she headed to Kapoeta to look for him, but died enroute. Now I am without my wife and my son.'

"Why was Garang taking the youngsters away?

"A young man answered me, saying: 'Because he had failed a long time ago to recruit young men.'

"There is a camp in al-Nasir where 12,000 members of the Uduk tribe live. I talked to Martha, a health-care worker there who told me that 89 youngsters had been taken from Ethiopia to Kapoeta in January 1990, including her only son, Walid, about whom she had not heard anything since. The SPLA told her that he was going to school in Kapoeta.

"As for the youngsters who left Ethiopia in May, they are now scattered in al-Nasir and Bushila. I visited some camps in al-Nasir, where close to 2,000 youngsters between the ages of six and 17 lived in two camps. I found them to be highly disciplined and watched over by supervisors who took care of them in [Itang]. The problem, however, was talking to these youngsters, because they did not know English and, therefore, I had to depend on the supervisors for interpreting. Under these circumstances, it was next to impossible to get a real answer to this sensitive question, because the interpreter did not always interpret what the youngsters had actually said.

"It is clear that rumors about 3,000 youngsters going to school and training in Cuba were true, because these youngsters spoke Spanish fluently and sang songs about Castro and his policies, which indicated that they had been politically indoctrinated. Moreover, their conversations were replete with terms like 'Arab colonialism' and 'northern Sudan imperialism.'

"Most of them had similar stories and anecdotes. For example, Robin [Trong], a 15-year old youngster from Bor, said that his father was killed in a village attacked by "Arabs" and "colonialists from the north" and, therefore, he went to Ethiopia in 1989 to attend a boarding school in [Kongor]. Robin went on to say that the regime in Kongor was not good because it is Arab, that he was happy in Ethiopia, that he did not miss his parents, and that he was studying English and math. He also praised Mengistu and assailed his successors.

"Thus, the general picture started to come to light. It seems that the SPLA had used substantial force and coercion to take youngsters away from villages and refugee camps to Ethiopia for military training. Even though many of them went to school as well, others—the older youngsters in particular—had been drafted for military service.

"I met with Eric Mashar's wife, who used to work for the 'International Children of the Streets' organization when she was single. She told me that Garang was very clever in taking youngsters away under the pretext of sending them to school, but instead putting them into military training. Her husband also told me that 'Garang did not tell them anything about the recruitment of youngsters.'

'It is obvious that eyewitnesses saw part of what happened. Up until August 1991, there were Red Army signs outside the main street in Kapoeta pointing to the Red Army training camp. Eyewitnesses also saw 11-year old youngsters undergoing training. Ever since this matter was exposed in July, the mere mention of the Red Army exposes a person to arrest.

'When the battle among SPLA factions was raging around Bor, many people saw 150 trucks with Garang forces crossing the Juba-Mongalla region. One-third of these forces were youngsters under the age of 15, some of whom were carrying sticks instead of rifles.

'On my way back from [Najonala—possibly Nejo] to Torit on 25 November, I saw scores of Red Army members 12 years of age.'

"Emma Mashar added: 'The Garang gang assembled a group of youngsters, some of whom were dying of malnutrition and lack of medical care, because Garang thought the international community would do something to help him, but this was nothing but a ploy.'

'On my recent visit to [Balataka—possibly Balata], I was shocked by the horrible conditions there, not only because youngsters were undergoing military training, but also because they were dying of malnutrition and easily-preventable diseases like malaria and diarrhea. Observers say that military training is still underway, but most of the youngsters are too weak or too ill to become effective soldiers.'

'I have no doubt whatsoever that, in this bitter civil war, youngsters 16 years of age or younger are being used in combat. Whatever Garang may admit or deny, this is the way things are. And whatever the traditions in southern Sudan, taking youngsters from their parents by force and under duress, and under bogus slogans and false pretenses to be used in this kind of war is totally unacceptable.'"

More Press Ordered on Sudanese-Libyan Integration

92AF0308B Khartoum SUNA in English 7 Dec 91 p 5

[Article: "Mass Media Role in Boosting Integration Reviewed"]

[Text] Khartoum, Dec. 7 (SUNA)—Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) Gen. Omer El Beshir met Saturday media and information representatives in the presence of the RCC Chairman's Press Adviser Al Sadiq Bakhit and Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture and Information Amin Hassan Omer.

Gen. El Beshir reviewed in the meeting the role to be played by media and information bodies to demonstrate the integration between Sudan and Arab Libyan Jamahiriya in its all aspects: political, economic, cultural and social.

He called on them not to only reflect the news aspect in covering events in the two countries, instead, reporting must analyse, evaluate and follow up the integration in order to reflect its popular dimensions. The integration between Darfur State and neighbouring Libyan provinces turned a success despite the absence of information and communications, he said.

Gen. El Beshir affirmed that relations with Libyan Jamahiriya are special and deep-rooted and within the coming two years they will move from the integration stage to merger unity on the way to achieve Arab and Islamic unity.

The meeting reviewed information and press performance of different information bodies. Suggestions were discussed to support and consolidate integration between the two countries. Weekly meetings were decided for follow up.

Iran Hailed as Model for Sudan

'Twin' Islamic Revolutions

92AF0312A Khartoum SUNA in English
14 Dec 91 pp 7, 8

[Article: "Rafsanjani, Beshir Address Muslim Scholars, Judges and Imams"]

[Text] Khartoum, 14 Dec (SUNA)—The Iranian President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hujatalislam Akbr Hashimi Rafsanjani has reemphasized importance of solidarity between all the Muslim countries for confronting the forces of International arrogance and cultural invasion.

Addressing a gathering of Muslim Ulmas (scholars), judges and Imams prayer leaders of mosques here Saturday, Rafsanjani praised the unity of Moslem scholars of the Sudan for their efforts to lay down the bases of the Islamic Sharia.

The elevation of the voice of Islam in a number of countries, as the Sudan, Keshmir, Lebanon and Afghanistan, affirms that the Islamic Revolution had started its steady march there, he said.

He pointed out that the current talks between the Sudan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are aimed at utilizing the capabilities and energies of the two countries for the interest of their peoples.

Meanwhile, Revolution Command Council (RCC) Chairman General Omer El Beshir addressed the gathering, welcoming the visit of President Rafsanjani.

He indicated that the Sudanese people have been awaiting this meeting since the advent of the Iranian Revolution which was led by the late leader, Ayatulallah Khomeini.

Gen. Beshir said the Muslim people of the Sudan have copied the Iranian Revolution and regarded it as a guide for rebuilding a state based on the teachings of Islam.

He described the National Salvation Revolution as a "twin" of the Iranian Revolution, saying it was able to eliminate partisanship and sectarianism in the Sudan.

Gen. Beshir has hailed solidarity of the Muslim scholars with the National Salvation Revolution since its eruption in June 1989

Beshir on Similarities

92AF0312B Khartoum SUNA in English
16 Dec 91 pp 4, 5

[Article: "Beshir Describes Rafsanjani's Visit as Successful"]

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Dec (SUNA)—The Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC), Gen. Omer El Beshir, has described as successful the visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hujatalislam Akbr Hashimi Rafsanjani, to Sudan during which, he said, the Iranian leadership had an insight into the Sudanese people and the islamization experience in Sudan.

Gen. El Beshir, speaking at a joint press conference with President Rafsanjani at the Republican Place here Monday, has granted that his government has gone a long way towards islamization of life in Sudan. Economically, he went on, usury transactions were banned at banks in Sudan, while laws were derived from the Holy Koran and Prophet Mohammad's sayings and deeds. The government has also taken measures for maintaining discipline among the public and making women wear the Islamic costume, he said, adding that his government seeks to revive Islamic values of social solidarity, change school curricula that would include Islamic studies as main subjects and reshape the Moslem Sudanese citizen by setting up military training camps for the Popular Defence Forces.

"We are borrowing from the Iranian experience of islamization," Beshir said adding that this would help in strengthening ties between the two countries.

Iranian Guests Decorated

92AF0312C Khartoum SUNA in English
16 Dec 91 pp 5, 6

[Article: "Decorations for Iranian Delegation Members"]

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Dec (SUNA)—Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) General Omer El Beshir Monday bestowed at the Republican Palace a number of decorations on some of the visiting Iranian delegation members in recognition of the role being played by the Iranian Revolution for boosting the Islamic cause and in honour of the Iranian leadership's efforts toward consolidating the bilateral relations between the Sudan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Gen. El Beshir has bestowed the Order of the Republic (First Class) on the general commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Major General Muhsin Ridhai and the Assistant to the President of the Republic, Dr. Hassan Rohani.

He also bestowed the Nilein Order (First Class) on Iranian President's Social and Political Advisors Massih Muhajiri and Ali Ridha Massiri besides the General Director of the Arab and Middle East Affairs Department Mohamed Kazin Khor Sai.

Gen. Beshir, meanwhile, bestowed the Nilein Decoration (Second Class) on the Cultural Advisor to the Iranian Embassy here, Amir Musawi.

The decorations' ceremony was attended by the RCC Deputy Chairman and a number of the RCC members and ministers.

Iranian-Sudanese Cooperation Accords Reviewed

Animal Husbandry Projects

92AF0311A Khartoum SUNA in English 14 Dec 91 p 1

[Article: "Sudan, Iran Sign Technical Cooperation Agreement in Animal Wealth"]

[Text] Khartoum, 14 Dec (SUNA)—The Sudan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have signed recently in Tehran an agreement on joint technical cooperation in the sphere of animal wealth and fisheries.

Animal Wealth Undersecretary Prof. Mohamed Saeed Harbi, who returned here Friday from Iran at the end of a working visit to there that lasted for a fortnight, said the agreement covered cooperation between the two countries in the field of animal production. The Sudan would export meat to Iran, he said. Iran, in turn, would send to Sudan improved breeds of animals and poultry.

Prof. Harbi pointed out that the agreement further included the technical cooperation as regards animal health and training. The two sides, furthermore, agreed on the formation of a joint Fishery firm, he said.

While in Iran, Prof. Harbi and the accompanying delegation toured the various sites of animal production in the country. The undersecretary commended the progress achieved by the Islamic republic in this field.

Oil To Be Supplied

92AF0311B Khartoum SUNA in English
16 Dec 91 pp 13, 14

[Article: "Iran To Supply Sudan With Petroleum, Develop Sudan Oil Fields"]

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Dec (SUNA)—Minister of Energy and Mining Dr. Osman Abdul Wahab has announced that the Iranian side of the joint technical economic committee in the bilateral talks, has shown cooperation to implement soon the memo of understanding signed two months ago during the visit of the Iranian technical delegation to Sudan.

In a statement to SUNA, Dr. Abdul Wahab said the memo stipulates that Iran will supply Sudan with its needs of crude oil, the digging of wells in Sudan's oil fields in addition to refining part of the Sudan's discovered crude.

Dr. Abdul Wahab added that the memo also includes the supply of some electrical fittings.

It is to be recalled that the Iranian technical delegation visited Sudan two months ago where it got acquainted with the available information on the Sudan's needs to develop some of its discovered oil fields.

Judicial Ties Foreseen

92AF0311C Khartoum SUNA in English 13 Dec 91 p 4

[Article: Judiciary Cooperation With Arab and Islamic States"]

[Text] Khartoum, 13 Dec (SUNA)—The Judiciary has future plans to cooperate with Iran in judicial fields to benefit from the experiences of the two countries, said the Chairman of the Training and Research Dept. at the Judiciary.

The High Court's Judge Abd El Rahman Sharafi said the Judiciary was seeking to consolidate ties with all Arab and Islamic countries. In this regard the Judiciary is cooperating with its Moroccan counterpart, he said, adding that the latter has donated the former a higher study-grant this year.

The Judiciary has cooperation with Yemen, the Sandi Institute for Security Studies and Training, the United Arab Emirates and Libya.

Oil Exploration Agreement Signed

92AF0309A Khartoum SUNA in English
17 Dec 91 pp 6, 7

[Text] Khartoum, Dec. 17 (SUNA)—An agreement was signed Tuesday at the Ministry of Energy and Mining between the Sudan government and the International Petroleum Company (Sudan Limited), owned by the Canadian International Petroleum Company, an oil exploration and sharing petroleum production.

The Energy and Mining Minister Dr. Osman Abdul-Wahab has signed for the government of the Sudan whereas the president of the company signed for the International Petroleum company.

In a press statement following signing of the agreement, Dr. Abdul-Wahab underlined that the agreement covers two fields in an area reaching 38,400 kilometers, at the Red Sea and its coast.

He said implementation of the agreement will start in Geophysical areas, by digging an oil well at Toker Delta.

Digging of the well aims at examining the quantity and quality of natural and liquefied gases. In case of existence of natural and liquefied gases at commercial quantities, Dr. Abdul-Wahab stated, the company will carry on expanding its exploration efforts by digging two more wells at Toker Delta in addition to three others at Halayib area in the Red Sea.

He explained that the agreement with the company remains valid for six years, saying the agreement period automatically extends to 26 years in case that oil, natural and liquefied gases were found in commercial quantities.

Dr. Abdul-Wahab, meanwhile, described the agreement between the Sudan government and the International Petroleum Company as satisfactory for both parties, goes in line with the standards known to the International petroleum industry and avoids the shortcomings of the previous agreements.

He pointed out that the signing of the agreement came as refutation to the rumours that the Sudan is a country not suitable for investment.

He said the signing of the agreement is regarded as the beginning for concluding similar agreements with many international oil exploration companies, explaining that a number of international companies have applied for oil exploration in different areas far in the Sudan.

The signing of the agreement was attended by the State Minister at the Energy and Mining Ministry Hassan Dhahawi, the General Director of the Public Petroleum Corporation Dr. Abdul-Rahman Osman and a number of the officials of the Canadian International Petroleum Company (Sudan Limited).

Khartoum Gets Own Green Book Center

92AF0308A Khartoum SUNA in English 27 Nov 91 p 2

[Article: "Maj. Gen. Salih and Col. Younis Inaugurate Global Centre for Green Book Research"]

[Text] Khartoum, Nov. 27 (SUNA)—Deputy Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) Major General El-Zubier Mohamed Salih and the visiting Member of Historical Leadership of the Libyan Revolution Colonel Abu Bakr Younis Wednesday inaugurated the Khartoum-based Global Centre for the Green Book Research.

The Secretary of the Libyan Brotherhood Office here addressed the inauguration ceremony, hailing the National Salvation Revolution's adoption of the People's Congresses system and the trend of transferring power to the people adding that such an attitude is conducive to the unity between the Sudanese and the Libyan peoples.

The inauguration ceremony was attended also by RCC Member Major General El-Tigani Adam El-Tahir, RCC Secretary General Col. Abdul-Tahim Mohamed Hussein, Khartoum State's Coordinator of People's Committees and a group of lecturers and researchers.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Minister Discloses 1992 Draft Budget Figures

92AE0148A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Dec 91 p 10

[Text] In a move that could mean that the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) budget for the 1992 fiscal year will come out at its constitutionally-decreed time, the UAE cabinet, in a meeting held yesterday and presided over by Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, vice president of the cabinet, looked over a preliminary report on the size of the estimated budget for the next fiscal year, as reported by the concerned ministries.

According to what Minister of State for Financial Affairs and Industry Ahmad Hamid al-Tayir explained after the cabinet's session, preliminary estimates of next year's budget are up to 19.9 billion Emirian dirhams, with an increase of 3.5 billion dirhams over this year's 1991 budget.

As for the expected revenues of the UAE's budget for next year, the deficit could rise to 4.2 billion dirhams.

The presentation of the preliminary report on next year's budget is seen as a strong indication of the government's determination to issue the budget early, in contrast to what has happened in previous years, when the ministries were late in submitting their financial estimates, which kept a full projection of the state budget from being prepared until several months after the actual start of the fiscal year.

According to estimates by economics experts, issuing the 1991 budget at a relatively early time—July of this year—gave the ministries a better chance to prepare their fiscal projections earlier and more precisely, in contrast to previous years, when the UAE budget did not come out until the last weeks, or even the last days, of the fiscal year.

If the estimates currently submitted are correct, it is expected that the 1992 budget will be put out in the first quarter of next year, something which represents a big change in the way the budget is prepared and put out. It also portends a period of great economic revival, especially after companies and establishments are given a better opportunity to plan their operations based on expected government spending.

The government is considered the principal source of spending, and government projects are considered the foundation of the course of the whole country's economy.

Early talk about issuing next year's budget reflects the extent of the effectiveness of measures by the UAE Government to readjust the organizational course of the government system as a whole. It also reflects the government's success in overcoming the problem of pre-allocation of budget revenues, regardless of what might happen in the world oil market, whose stability represents a basic element in the stability of the state's financial resources, in which oil comprises a basic, decisive element. It was decided, according to the statement issued by the cabinet session yesterday, that the Ministry of Finance and Industry will review their financial estimates with the ministries, which will take several weeks.

Besides the UAE budget, the cabinet meeting yesterday approved the judicial cooperative agreement and recognition of rulings from France, and a transport agreement with Czechoslovakia. It also looked at a report on UAE participation in the meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Port Zayid Traffic Reported for 1987-90

92AE0148B *Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 2 Dec 91 p 2*

[Text] A statistical report explained that Port Zayid had, in recent years, seen growth in productivity at a time when indications showed that the port was proceeding with firm, well-studied, and planned steps in applying a scientific program of modern administration and using international and scientific marketing methods.

According to the report, which was distributed on the occasion of the United Arab Emirates' National Day, the total of various goods delivered rose from 903,212 tons in 1988 to 1,062,946 tons in 1989; then dropped to 1,057,737 tons in 1990.

It is clear from these figures that the rate of increase for 1989 was 18 percent over 1988, and 17 percent for 1990 over 1988.

The report mentioned that even though all ports of the region had been affected by the Gulf crisis, which began on 2 August 1990. It caused an increasing decline in ships coming to the region, which subsequently affected the goods that arrived at the ports. Port Zayid, in spite of this crisis, was able to preserve excellent productivity as a result of marketing activities.

In this regard, the report noted that, in spite of the cessation of transit goods and freight passing through to Kuwait—which used to represent an important part of the port's activity—its recent success in resuming these operations and adding them to the rest of its various activities had a positive effect on productivity.

In this regard, the report noted that December 1990 had witnessed the delivery of goods that the port had not seen before. In fact, they are considered record figures for the port, for 147,315 tons had been delivered during that month.

The report mentioned that at the start of 1991, an ambitious marketing plan was drawn up for the first time to increase the port's productivity. It aimed to increase the volume of goods delivered by 20 percent.

The figures that were achieved, according to the report, showed that, during the past nine months of 1991, the figures targeted by the plan were attained. The volume of goods that were unloaded from container ships in the past year was 299,888 tons, compared to 315,897 tons in 1989; loose goods were 296,513 tons compared to 246,686; dry goods were 18,254 tons compared to 202,547 tons; and loose discharged goods 278,795 tons compared to 297,816 tons.

The report noted through these aforementioned figures, that an increase of 20 percent had been achieved in the area of loose goods. Of the total goods off loaded last year, container goods represented 26 percent; loose goods represented 28 percent; discharged liquid goods represented 27 percent; and dry goods 17 percent.

With regard to containers handled, the total unloaded during the past years was 45,733 containers in 1990; 45,788 containers in 1989; 42,693 containers in 1988; and 29,901 containers in 1987.

These figures show growth in the number of containers unloaded year after year. Even though the ports of the region were affected in the amount of goods and containers unloaded, the number of containers unloaded in Port Zayid was not affected. In spite of the drop in, or cessation of, transit operations and "through freight" to the ports of the region since the crisis—which used to represent a large part of the port's activity—marketing activity was intensified so that the port's productivity would not be affected by the crisis. The increase in incoming containers was 8 percent; outgoing containers

21 percent; and empty containers and containers delivered to ships 7 percent. But the real drop was in containers in transit and others being re-shipped.

The number of ships coming to Port Zayid rose from 897 to 1,015, then to 1,050 during the years 1988, 1989, and 1990.

The report stated that the activity of ships coming to the ports was up by 3 percent, the increase in ships carrying general goods was 12 percent; roll-on/roll-off ships and automobiles was 17 percent; and ships carrying dry goods 10 percent. During 1990, 1,577 sea-faring vessels came to the free port, an increase of 3 percent over 1989.

WESTERN SAHARA

Algerian Paper Criticizes Conditions in Camps

92AF0268C Casablanca LE MATIN DU SAHARA
in French 22 Dec 91 p 3

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] In its 17-23 December issue LE JEUNE INDEPENDANT, an Algerian weekly published in French, devoted an entire page to the human rights situation under the "Polisario" [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro]. It discussed this matter on the basis of evidence from "former members of the Polisario" who have returned to Morocco.

In its introduction the weekly publication stated that certain sources, "are convinced" that the people of the Sahara "cannot exist except as a part of Morocco" and that "human rights have been totally flouted by the Polisario since 1976."

The weekly continued that the "documents" containing this evidence report "cases of imprisonment, torture, arrests, and physical liquidation."

LE JEUNE INDEPENDANT continued that, "Polisario," since its establishment, has set up a formidable security service in its ranks, composed of two elements: the Directorate of Military Security and the permanent secretariat of the Political Bureau. These two services arrest both civilians as well as military personnel. Their leaders exercise highly despotic and unlimited power. People in the camps and in the military service are infiltrated and closely watched by a large number of agents of these services."

The paper stated: "The leadership of the Polisario exercises dominant and dictatorial authority. It accepts no expression of critical or oppositionist opinion. Any person reported to have taken any position at all (even of the least importance) that goes against or simply criticizes the approved line of conduct is arrested, tortured and imprisoned for long periods of time in a place

boastfully called a prison but which, in fact, is nothing but a group of trenches and caves dug in the ground and surrounded by a fence built of rocks, with zinc-roofed office structures.

"Many pretexts are used to arrest a person, and all of them are equally false. Out of a concern to eliminate its real or potential opponents from time to time the leadership of the 'Polisario' makes up imaginary networks (Chabaka) accused of having contact with 'the enemy.' It announces the breakup of these networks and thereby imprisons undesirable persons.

"Any excuse is a good one for arresting a person previously designated, including any kind of mistake, even unintentional—such as damaging a 'Land Rover' vehicle or losing a sidearm. This is considered an act of sabotage against the 'revolution,' and the person involved is subjected to imprisonment and torture.

"The Polisario leaders, who are notoriously known for their bad conduct and low-level morals, are very vindictive against any person (women in particular) who refuses to lend himself or herself to their immoral desires. The husband, brother, or father of a young woman who is an object of their lust who tries to act to save the honor of a relative is listed as a disturbing element and put in prison at the first opportunity that comes up.

"Among the methods of repression torture, the daily language of the monstrous Polisario security services, spreads its pernicious effects through all of the civilian and military components of the organization.

"Torture is carried out in different ways, including the use of 'bandages over the eyes,' 'handcuffs and ropes,' 'silence,' 'the torturer's step,' 'electricity,' 'cigarettes,' 'the angles,' 'the teeth,' and 'the syringe.' In short, the prison world of the Polisario is composed of suffering, suffocation, screams, and tears."

One of the documents quoted by LE JEUNE INDEPENDANT "speaks of 16 notorious torturers," including Ahmed El Batal, the present Polisario 'minister of health,' "who has placed his diabolical stamp on the repressive services of the Polisario. He was director of these services from 1975 to 1982."

This document also described the repression that fell on the detainees in the Tindouf camps at the time of the events of October 1988: "The uprising in the Tindouf camps, which took place in October 1988, was put down in the most savage way by Polisario military personnel," who were called "the bloodthirsty ones."

The document continued: "The residents of the four camps, most of them women, children, and old people...were savagely beaten with clubs, the butts of Kalashnikov rifles, and thick, electric cables.

"Those living in entire camps were lined up not far from the principal refugee camp, where groups of those who were arrested were taken and tortured.

"Since then the civilian population of the camps has never recovered from this traumatic experience. Even the military personnel, who had been deceived by the leaders of the 'Polisario,' once they saw the evidence of the savagery of the acts committed, regretted their efforts to repress the civilians in the camps."

The same documents published by LE JEUNE INDEPENDANT referred to several specific cases of violations of human rights committed by the security services of the "Polisario," in which "46 persons were killed while being tortured," many people "came down with mental illness" following their period of detention in the jails operated by the torturers, "94 other persons were imprisoned and tortured," and "107 persons were tortured at the time of the events of October 1988," and "are still in 'Polisario' custody."

BANGLADESH

Zia Meets Press on Return From Islamic Summit

Remarks on Domestic Affairs

92AS0469A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
13 Dec 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, yesterday said that anyone making the people the victim of terrorism or damaging public property would get the due punishment according to the law.

Speaking at a news conference at the Zia International Airport on her return from the just ended Islamic Summit at Dakar, the capital of Senegal, the Prime Minister replying to questions said that the government would not hesitate to take actions under the law against any offender who caused harm to the people with violence.

The Prime Minister replied to a wide range of questions on domestic as well as international affairs at the news conference.

The Prime Minister said, "A terrorist does not belong to any political party. An offender would get punishment under the law whoever he may be."

The Prime Minister also said in reply to a question that there had been no discrimination in arresting the offenders as had been alleged.

When a questioner asked that there were allegations that the terrorists were there at least in three parties while those arrested belonged to only one party the Prime Minister said, "It is not correct."

"Even my own party men were also arrested."

The Prime Minister said, student politics cannot devote to terrorism.

"That is why we did not suspend the normal activities of the JCD (Jatiya Chhatra Dal) on the campus which any student organisation should do," she said replying to the question why BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) did not suspend the activities of its student front as the Leader of the Opposition did.

The Prime Minister in her reply asked, what could be the meaning of suspending the normal activities of any student organisation for causing harm to the people by damaging cars, etc., particularly whenever an offender was arrested.

The Prime Minister said that it was notable that the JCD was winning the campus elections throughout Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister said, "We believe in democracy. That is why we are discussing with the political parties, some of which are not in Parliament also, to eliminate terrorism and violence."

The Prime Minister indicated the Government valued the political parties that were in the nine years of movement for the restoration of democracy.

She was replying to the question, "People gave you the mandate to suppress terrorism why then is your government inviting the parties to discuss the question of eliminating terrorism?"

The Prime Minister told a questioner that the JP (Jatiya Party) had not been involved in the discussions because of its involvement in the autocratic rule. This is not really a political party, she added. It did immense harm to the people and the country, she said.

"We restored democracy. If anyone damages property and vehicles, they are destroying the property of the people. We condemn it. Actions would be taken against the offenders according to the law," the Prime Minister said replying to the question, "People have been bitterly opposing those causing losses to property. But over the last few days some opposition elements damaged vehicles on the roads and they have been using illegal weapons against the people. How could this be justified under democracy?"

The Prime Minister added that offenders against the people would get the due punishments under the law.

Asked what were her replies to some of the parties bringing allegations of failures against the Government the Prime Minister said, "Considering the situation in which we took power, this government's performance has been the best so far in Bangladesh. What our government has done in three months for the good of the people, the ousted government could not do in nine years." The Prime Minister also mentioned the severe natural disasters that her government tackled so well soon after it was elected to power.

Repeatedly asked for her comments on the letters the Leader of the Opposition recently wrote to the foreign missions inviting interference into the internal affairs of the country the Prime Minister said, "It is not proper for anyone to write such letters to foreign countries."

The Prime Minister initially avoided an answer and instead put back the question to the questioner. "What are your comments?"

But when the questioner repeated the question several times the Prime Minister said, "Bangladesh is an independent and sovereign country. We consider that we the people of Bangladesh alone have to solve whatever problems are there in Bangladesh. No one from outside can either solve the problems, nor it would be proper to seek such help."

"Better wait for the recommendations of the Commission entrusted with the responsibility," the Prime Minister said when asked what "shape the thana parishads would be given."

"Let law alone take its course," was the reply of the Prime Minister when asked whether the ousted autocrat would be set free as was being demanded by the discredited JP.

The Prime Minister said that the court was trying the charges and it was for the court alone to give the decisions.

Political Crisis Denied

92AS0469B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 13 Dec 91 p 1

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Thursday dismissed allegation about the existence of any "political crisis" asserting that the nation has been on a sound footing, reports UNB.

She said her new government had made tremendous headway within a short time since it took over. "There is no political crisis.... This has been the most successful government," she said.

Talking to newsmen at the airport on her return from OIC [Organization of Islamic] Conference in Senegal Thursday afternoon, the Prime Minister said a great deal had been achieved in the last few months when the government successfully improved the situation inherited from years of autocratic rule.

"We believe in the politics of peace and prosperity," she said adding that the main objective of the democratic government is to maintain law and order.

Damaging vehicles and public property is beyond democratic norms, Begum Zia said referring to recent incidents in the capital. Those who do not believe in democracy disturb people and damage property of the people," she observed.

Giving her comments on the letter written by leader of the opposition to different diplomatic missions in Dhaka, she said, "Its very unbecoming of a political leader to write such letters to foreigners."

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh is an independent and democratic country and no problem at home could be solved by outsiders.

Replying to a question as to why her party did not ban politics of its student wing, Begum Zia said "student politics is not the cause of terrorism."

Those who are involved in terrorism stopped their activities only for show, she said.

Replying to another question Begum Zia asserted that she did not recognize Jatiya Party as a political party which, she said, was a product of autocratic rule.

She said the organisation involved in killing of democracy could never be invited to any discussion on national issues.

BSS adds: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia returned home Thursday afternoon after attending the four-day sixth summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) held in Dakar, Senegal.

Ministers, Dhaka City Mayor, State Ministers, diplomats and high civil and military officials received her at the Zia International Airport.

Begum Zia was given a guard of honour by the three services. She inspected the guard and took the salute.

The chiefs of three services were present on the occasion.

The Prime Minister's entourage included Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman, Mrs Farida Rahman MP, Mr Salauddin Kamran MP, Dr. Afsar Hossain Mollah MP, Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, secretary, external relations divisions and Mr. Farooq Sobhan, additional foreign secretary.

Remarks on Summit

92AS0469C Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
13 Dec 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, yesterday said that the solution of problems facing the member countries and forging of greater solidarity among them were the main concerns at the just concluded OIC summit in the capital of Senegal.

The Prime Minister, who led the Bangladesh delegation at the summit, was speaking at a news conference at the Zia International Airport on her return home.

The Prime Minister said that at the Dakar summit she also held bilateral discussions with the other heads of state and government.

She said that the summit accepted five proposals of Bangladesh including for the betterment of children, and women in the member countries, assistance for the economic development of less developed member countries.

The Prime Minister said that some of the proposals would be discussed further at the ministerial level follow-up meetings.

The Prime Minister was received at the airport by the members of the cabinet, diplomats, senior civil and military officers including the three service chiefs. A contingent drawn from the three services gave the Prime Minister a guard of honour.

The Prime Minister said that setting up of an Islamic Common Market was discussed at the summit for the rapid development of the OIC countries.

Shaheed Ziaur Rahman, during his presidency repeatedly moved for setting up of an Islamic Common Market for the benefit of the member countries.

The Prime Minister also said that the king of Saudi Arabia announced the waiving of loans to poor Islamic countries while the summit was in progress.

Replying to a host of questions the Prime Minister said that she had discussions with the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif about the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis from Bangladesh and expressed the hope that the repatriation would take place some time next year.

She said that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees also met her in Dakar and added she discussed with him the repatriation question.

The Secretary General of our party already gave the reactions, she said when asked what were her government's comments on the detention of the Burmese elected, leader Aung Sung Suu Kyl.

"We are optimistic about a solution," she said when asked what were her reactions on the outstanding problems with India including the Ganges water sharing question and the transfer of Tin Bigha corridor to Bangladesh to link it with its two enclaves of Dahagram and Angarpota.

When a newsman asked her to comment on a news report that she was going to Tin Bigha at the handing over ceremony which was due this month the Prime Minister said, "I don't know that I am going. Are you sending me? But we expect a solution."

The Prime Minister said that with the other leaders of the OIC countries she had bilateral discussions for increased trade and economic cooperation between their countries and Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister said that she also requested the OIC countries to increase their imports from Bangladesh.

Asked whether the non-attendance by some of the Arab countries was to belittle the conference she replied, "No, they all sent their representatives. All the important issues facing the OIC were discussed."

Asked whether Bangladesh would benefit from the waiving of the Saudi loans the Prime Minister said, "Of course, all the borrowers would."

The Prime Minister said that the summit discussed important global issues, the impact of the Gulf War, and the important events which took place both within and outside the Islamic world.

She said that Azerbaijan was made a new member of the OIC at the summit.

Among the proposals of Bangladesh for the benefit of the people in the member countries, she said, were an action plan for the betterment of the children, and how to improve the socio-economic condition of the women and assistance for the economic development of the less developed states.

Support From Bush Deemed 'Heartening'

92AS0466A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
28 Nov 91 p 5

[Editorial: Bush's Assurance to Bangladesh"]

[Text] The United States stands ready to assist Bangladesh in its strides for development of democratic institutions. The assurance came from President Bush on the occasion of accepting the letter of credence from our new Ambassador to Washington in the White House on Monday. While appreciating the new government's stand on respect for human rights, historic step in the progress of democracy as well as the solid progress in the economic reforms programme, President Bush reemphasized his commitment to working with Bangladesh leadership towards the common goals of democracy, stability and economic development.

Verily, our endeavours towards building sound democratic institutions as well as economic self-reliance have endeared this country to the community of nations. Viewed in the context of mounting difficulties arising out of stagnating economic scenario left as the legacy of nine years of autocratic rule coupled with crippling effects of the Gulf War and devastating cyclone last spring, projections of the present government in various spheres will help confidence building abroad.

It is heartening that President Bush promised strong support to Bangladesh's strivings for revitalising the private sector and making public sector more efficient so as to attract more and more domestic and foreign investment. No doubt, our economic progress hinges on greater resource mobilisation, augmenting production in fields and factories with an eye to boosting exports. The real impediment to promotion of our export earning is the trade barrier imposed by the developed countries on the products from the developing nations. Realisation of this bare fact by the US President to the hilt and his hopeful expectations about the outcome of the current Uruguay Round talks in Geneva are reassuring indeed. "Let us hope for a successful multilateral trade solution in the Uruguay Round which will serve the cause of freer trade worldwide," observed Mr Bush.

In the backdrop of friendly relations and close cooperation between the two countries, in times of weal and woe, Bangladesh can very much count on the support and assistance from this Superpower.

That the initial difficulties of a newly elected government after many years of anti-people government are being appreciated by our friends is good augury. Faced with an array of competing priorities the government took time to settle down. But now it has got on with the urgent tasks in right earnest.

India's Home Minister on Bangladeshi Influx*92AS0470 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English
6 Dec 91 p 4*

[Article by Prasun Sonwalkar; quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, December 5—The statements made and the figures cited by the Union home minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, in the Lok Sabha on Monday while replying to a question on foreign nationals staying illegally in the country indicates that official figures are far removed from the ground reality.

According to the Union minister of state for home, Mr M.M. Jacob, there were 1 lakh Bangladeshi nationals in New Delhi, 9,561 Pakistan nationals overstaying, while the figure for West Bengal was 5.87 lakh and 25,000 in the case of Rajasthan. Curiously there was no figure given of foreign nationals overstaying in the North-East.

It is evident that the figure cited for West Bengal is nowhere near the actual figure collected by various authoritative sources, including by the state's former governor, Mr V.T. Rajeswar, former intelligence chief.

It is also clear that of all the instances of migration, or foreigners staying illegally, the migration from Bangladesh is the most heavy and has already resulted in conclusions in at least one state: Assam.

However, what is of more consequence now is the repeated statement being made in Bangladesh about India's North-East being its "Lebensraum," or, natural living space, for its nationals. It is in this context that the statements made in the Lok Sabha appear "out of tune" with reality.

Officially, Bangladesh has never admitted that any of its nationals is illegally staying outside the country, certainly not in India.

The popular perception in what is now Bangladesh is that it was cheated at the time of partition of the whole of India's North-East, which has always been viewed as its natural expanding space.

The sustained migration of people from Bangladesh to the North-East over the years is significant in the context of the "strong hope" in that country that the "historical injustice" done to it would ultimately be corrected. It is clear that no amount of border patrolling or fencing along the Bangladesh border could curb the inflow of Bangladesh nationals into the North-East.

Perceptions of the North-East being Bangladesh's 'lebensraum' are now increasingly being articulated in the open, in print.

The newsweekly DHAKA COURIER (issue dated September 6-12 1991) carried an account with names and photographs of "more than 1,50,000 [as published] Bangladeshis who have found a home in Delhi."

Another important indication of the magnitude of the phenomenon is an article, "The question of lebensraum" by Mr Sadiq Khan in the October 18 issue of HOLIDAY, another weekly from Dhaka.

An intellectual belonging to an illustrious and politically-active family, he argued that along with the new international order, there should also be a 'world demographic order'.

Conceived as part of this new "world demographic order," is a "globalised manpower market," writes Mr Sadiq Khan. There is no reason why regional and international co-operation could not be worked out to plan and execute population movements and settlements to avoid critical demographic pressures in pockets of high concentration.

A crucial passage in the article reads: "A natural outflow of population pressure (in Bangladesh) is very much on the cards and will not be restrainable by barbed wire or border patrol measures. The natural trend of population overflow from Bangladesh is towards the sparsely-populated lands of the South-East in the Arakan side and of the North-East in the seven sisters side of the Indian sub-continent."

PRC Family Planning Minister Meets With Biswas*92AS0464A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 10 Dec 91 p 10*

[Article: "China To Extend Help To Combat Population Boom"]

[Text] China will extend all-out support and cooperation to the programme initiated by the present Government to combat the population boom, visiting Chinese Minister for Family Planning Madam Peng Peiyun said when she called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at the Bangabhaban Monday, reports BSS.

Madam Peng said that she had a very fruitful discussion on matters of mutual interests with particular emphasis on population problem with the leaders and officials of the Bangladesh government.

Madam Peng appreciated the steps undertaken by the government to solve the population problem being faced by the country and said China and Bangladesh would continue to work closely in all fields to bring socio-economic development of the two peoples.

She also conveyed the best wishes to President Biswas from the Chinese President, Yang Sangkun.

The Chinese Minister recalling the recent visit of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said, she hoped the visit would go a long way to further cement the existing friendship between the two countries.

President Biswas said the Chinese cooperation in various fields including science and technology contributed immensely in the development process of Bangladesh.

The President also outlined the programmes undertaken by the Government in combatting population explosion and said more cooperation was needed for China as they had rich experience in this field. He recalled the Chinese help at the hour of need.

The Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Health Secretary M. Makkamel Huq, Secretary to the President A.N.M. Eusuf and Chinese Ambassador Cheng Song Lu were present on the occasion.

Former Vice President Sentenced to Prison

92AS0463A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
8 Dec 91 pp 1, 3

[Article by staff reporter: "Moudud Sent to Jail"]

[Text] The Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Azizul Huq Bhuiyan yesterday sent former Vice President Moudud Ahmed facing corruption charges to jail rejecting his petition to extend his bail.

Along with accused ousted autocrat Ershad, Moudud faces the charge for selling a large plot of RAJUK land at Shahbagh for building a five-star hotel in the city at unduly low price causing the exchequer a loss of over Taka 10 crore.

Moudud was on bail which expired on November 20.

He went to the Metropolitan Court with a petition, he filed on December 5, for an extension of the bail which the Court rejected.

Police charge-sheeted the accused in the case on August 28.

Other accused in the case include a former Minister in the ousted government Shafiqul Gani Shapan, businessman and the ousted autocrat's associate Abul Khair Litu, and former Chairman of RAJUK Abul Bashar, who recently died.

The ousted autocrat has already been convicted with 10 years of imprisonment for keeping illegal arms, a criminal offence. He also faces trial on several other criminal charges including amassing wealth disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The ousted autocrat usurped power on March 24, 1982, at the gun point overthrowing an elected government and ruled the country as his personal property. He undermined the judiciary, and other democratic institutions flouting the Constitution of the Republic and with his cronies plundered national resources and ruined the national economy during nine years of his misrule.

High Court Rules on Ershad Detention

92AS0465A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 10 Dec 91 p 1

[Article: "Ershad's Detention Upheld by HC (High Court)"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] A single-judge bench of the High Court division Monday rejected the writ petition, challenging the legality of the detention of deposed President Hussain Mohammad Ershad, reports BSS.

Mr. Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury delivering his judgement, said the order of detention against Ershad was passed legally and with lawful authority.

The judge said the grounds on which the detaining authority wanted Ershad's detention have 'substance and nexus with the detention order'. Ershad's past activities show that he is a potential threat to society, he said.

The verdict said the detaining authority has rightly neutralised or immobilised Ershad for the greater good of the country.

Individual freedom, although a cherished desire of everyone, is subject to the greater interest of society. National security is more important than individual liberty, Justice Chowdhury observed.

Earlier on March 20 this year, a two-judge division bench of the High Court Division gave a split judgement on the writ petition, challenging Ershad's detention.

Mr. Justice Mohammad Abdul Jalil had found the detention illegal while Mr. Justice Kazi Shafiuddin differed with his colleague. The judges referred the matter to the Chief Justice who in turn appointed Mr. Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury as the third judge to hear the matter afresh.

Deposed President H.M. Ershad was arrested on December 12, 1990 and put under detention.

Mr. Mustafizur Rahman, brother-in-law of Ershad filed the writ petition on January 29 challenging the detention and the division bench issued rule upon the Government the same day. Two of three judges of the High Court division discharged the rule.

Mr. Ershad has already been sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in the arms case and the proceedings of sensational gold smuggling case against him were stayed by the High Court Division Bench. He is also facing two more cases before the Special Tribunal, Dhaka.

Kazi Shahadat Hossain Mr. M. Monsur Ali and Sheikh Rezaul Karim appeared on behalf of the petitioner.

Attorney General Mr. Aminul Huq, Deputy Attorney General A.F. Hasan Arif and Assistant Attorney General Mr. Obaidur Rahman Mostafa appeared for the state.

Hasina Letters to Foreign Missions Scored

92AS0472A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
26 Nov 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Political parties, socio-cultural organisations as well as people from all walks of life in statements protested the recent letters by Awami League Chief and Leader of Opposition Sheikh Hasina, MP [member of Parliament], to foreign missions and donor agencies.

They said that the Leader of the Opposition has shown disrespect for Parliament and the people of Bangladesh in behaving the way she did.

They described writing of such letters by the Leader of the Opposition to foreign missions and donor agencies was "irresponsible and uncalled for."

The foreign missions and the donor agencies themselves were surprised and shocked to receive such letters which reflected a "complete lack of national self-respect" on the part of a person who is the Leader of the Opposition, that is the shadow Prime Minister, they said.

They said that by writing letters like this Sheikh Hasina, if anything has only showed that she does not mean what she often says for making Parliament sovereign.

They also said that the letter reflected her utter ignorance about parliamentary system.

They also said that by repeatedly behaving the way she has been Sheikh Hasina is only proving that all her previous statements in favour of establishment of Parliamentary system were nothing more than hollow slogans. She has only been proving time and again that she does not understand the system. Otherwise she could not have repeatedly taken to such frivolous behaviour in her bid to make issues out of non-issues.

They said that the nation naturally expects the Leader of the Opposition to be responsible and sober instead of the way she loves to behave.

They also said that unfortunately Sheikh Hasina has shown a tendency to make herself a laughing stock by describing the February 27 general elections as "subtly rigged," which she loves to repeat.

Her bid to make a famine in the northern districts also reflected the same attitude.

JSD [Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal] (Mohiuddin) President Mohiuddin Ahmed and General Secretary Azizul Islam Swapan in a statement said that by sending the letters Sheikh Hasina has only undermined Bangladesh's image. They said that Sheikh Hasina has been repeatedly hitting at the newly established democratic system.

Bangladesh Scheduled Castes Federation condemning the letters said that the Opposition Leader's invitation of foreign domination was a betrayal of the nation. The Federation said that while Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made immense contributions in the freedom

movement of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina was just doing the opposite. The Federation of Scheduled Castes said by writing the letters to foreign missions to interfere in Bangladesh's affairs Sheikh Hasina has only showed disrespect to her late father.

It called upon the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the letters and for issuance of a statement by her to show respect to the people of Bangladesh and also to the country's sovereignty.

Bangladesh Muslim League at a meeting described Sheikh Hasina's letters as "completely irresponsible." The meeting chaired by M.A. Hannan said that such invitation to interfere in the country's affairs can in no way be desirable.

Bangladesh Juba Shakii at a meeting at its office took resolutions condemning the letter and describing it as "motivated" which "amounted to threat to the country's independence." It also said that by sending such a letter Sheikh Hasina has proved that she is engaged in a deep conspiracy against Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Islamic party leaders Sheikh Ashraf Hossain and Advocate Abdul Mobin in a statement described the letter as "a deep conspiracy against the interest of the country and its independence."

Advocate Ataul Haq Khan, a Muslim League leader said the Opposition Leader's letters to foreign missions and donor agencies inviting interference in the affairs of the country "is not only painful but also tantamounts to sedition."

Bangladesh Janata Party President Abdullah Al Naser said that by writing the letters Sheikh Hasina has proved that her frequent statements for democracy and sovereign Parliament were nothing but "stunts" and "lip services." The letter only betrayed the national cause, he said.

Qualifications for Parishad Elections Detailed

92AS0467A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
26 Nov 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The elections to the Union Parishads will be held on the basis of direct adult franchise from January 14-25 next throughout the country, reports BSS.

Chairman and nine members (three members from each ward) from the three wards of each Union Parishad will be elected by the people of the concerned Union Parishads. [sentence as published]

According to the detailed schedule already announced by the Election Commission, the nomination papers for elections to the Union Parishads have to be filed with the returning officers concerned on December 7 (Saturday).

The Election Commission had also specified eligibility of a person seeking election to the post of chairman and member of the union parishad.

A person will be qualified to be elected as a chairman or member of a union parishad under section 7(1) of the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, 1983, if he is a citizen of Bangladesh, he has attained the age of twenty-five years and his name appears on the electoral roll for any ward in the union.

A person will be disqualified for election as a chairman or a member of a union section 7(2) of the aforesaid ordinance, if he is a chairman of a upazila parishad (the upazila parishads have been abolished under the local government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganisation) (repeal) Ordinance, 1991 issued recently), he is declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind, he is an undischarged insolvent, he ceased to be a citizen of Bangladesh, he has been on conviction for a criminal offence involving moral turpitude, sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years, unless a period of five years has elapsed since his release, he holds any fulltime office of profit in the service of the republic or of the union parishad or any other local authority, he is a party to a contract for work to be done for or Goods to be supplied to, the union parishad concerned, or has otherwise any pecuniary interest in its affairs, or is a dealer in essential commodities appointed by the Government.

A person will be disqualified if he has defaulted in repaying any loan taken by him from any specified bank within the time allowed by the bank thereof (bank means Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank, Janata Bank, Shilpa Rin Sangstha, Bangladesh Shilpa Bank, House Building Finance Corporation, Krishi Bank. The Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank and the Rupali Bank Limited), or he is a member of Parliament.

Each candidate will be required to attach a treasury challan or bank receipt showing the deposit of a specific amount of money as security in a government treasury or sub-treasury or in any branch of the Sonali Bank. The head of deposit will be "Il-Bibhagiya O Bichar Bibhagiya Jama (1)-Beshamarik Jama-Nirbachan Sangkranta Jama."

The amount of money to be deposited as security will be Taka one thousand for each chairman candidate and Taka five hundred for each candidate for election of members. This amount of security money can also be deposited in cash direct with the Returning Officer concerned. The money receipt issued by the Returning Officer will be required to be attached with the nomination papers in such cases.

No nomination paper shall be accepted by the Returning Officer, unless it is accompanied by the treasury challan, bank receipt or money receipt showing the aforesaid security deposit.

Only one deposit will be required for those candidates who would submit more than one nomination paper.

Fourth Five-Year Plan Reduced to Three-Year Plan

92AS0473A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
29 Nov 91 pp 1, 8

[Article by A.Z.M. Haider]

[Text] The government has of late pruned the ambitious Fourth Five-Year Plan (1990-95) with non-availability of resources for certain projects incorporated in it and reduced it to what is called three-year rolling plan keeping in view high-priority, projects funding for the implementation of which will not be difficult.

The rolling plan is the outcome of a series of pruning exercises, last one held by the programming committee during 17-22 August, 1991. This exercise was undertaken at the advice of the World Bank and certain other donor agencies which suggested screening of the Fourth Plan to shed low-priority projects or the ones for which foreign financing is not readily available to accommodate the multi-purpose Jamuna Bridge which is a top priority project of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) for early implementation. What is more, it is not difficult for the (GOB) to mobilize resources including foreign financing for implementation of this vital project.

After the copies of the three-year rolling plan was distributed by the Planning Minister, Zahiruddin Khan, at a meeting with the donor countries and agencies in Dhaka last week, the GOB had started receiving encouraging response from the donors. A spokesman of External Resources Division (ERD) expressed optimism about the availability of the external financing for the projects incorporated, after a lot of pruning exercises, in the three-year rolling plan.

The implementation strategy of the rolling programme has emphasised on the interdependence of various sectoral projects and programmes as well as on the integration of group-based approach in the preparation of projects and programmes in such sectors as agriculture, rural development, poverty alleviation, health and population control. It also stressed on the reduction of dependence on public sector investment and promotion of private sector for increased sectoral growth and underlined the importance of community participation in the implementation of public sector projects.

While screening projects and determining priority for the three-year rolling programme the GOB has assigned lower priority to projects to be totally financed from local resources due to shortage of taka fund.

Projects (both aided and unaided) facing implementation difficulties for various reasons have also been assigned lower priority. It is possible that when those difficulties are removed, the priority of some such projects may be restored.

Despite all the difficulties and constraints stated above such vital sectors in the Human Resources Development, such as, health and nutrition, education, manpower development and social welfare projects have been protected both in terms of priority as also in the allocations.

The introductory note appended to the rolling programme expressed utter disappointment with the growth rate of the country's economy which stood at around 3.8 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is highly unsatisfactory, particularly in the face of increasing poverty and decreasing purchasing power in the rural areas. The new Government is determined to offset this trend which would require vigorous mobilization of both human resources and internal financial resources during the coming years. The pruning of the Fourth Five-Year Plan into a three-year rolling programme is only a first step in this endeavour. As more reform measures are adopted, and more dynamism is generated through human resource mobilization and participatory planning, the nature, scope and significance of the three-year rolling programme will have to be adjusted to the reality and dynamics of higher growth and better distribution.

Bangladesh Bank Announces New Policy

92AS0471A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 1 Dec 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Scheduled banks, henceforth, will be required to maintain only seven percent of their deposits in the form of cash with the Bangladesh Bank instead of present eight percent, according to the new monetary policy measures announced by the Bangladesh Bank in Dhaka on Saturday, reports BSS.

According to bank sources, this measures, taken to stimulate national economy, will increase loanable funds with the scheduled banks by nearly Taka two hundred 50 crore.

The central bank has also withdrawn the present prescribed minimum L/C [letter of credit] margin of ten percent for commercial imports bringing it at par with L/C margin policy for industrial imports.

As a result of withdrawal of the minimum L/C margin on commercial imports, the sources said, the L/C margin requirement for both industrial and commercial imports would be determined by the banks on the basis of banker-customer relationship.

Earlier, the central bank reduced bank rate and lowered bank lending rate through the announcement of a new interest-rate matrix.

The Bangladesh Bank observed that these policy measures on the monetary front would augment the flow of bank credit, help increase production and expand internal and external trade in the direction of stimulating national economy activities.

English, Bengali Official Court Languages

92AS0474A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 29 Nov 91 pp 1, 10

[Excerpt] A Division Bench of the High Court Division in a judgment delivered on Thursday has declared that English shall continue to be the language of subordinate judiciary of the country parallel with Bangla until the Government otherwise directs under Section 137 of the Code of Civil Procedure, and the Government may also declare what shall be the language of the subordinate courts.

A Division Bench comprising Mr Justice A.R.M. Amirul Islam Chowdhury and Mr. Justice A.M. Mahmudur Rahman, heard 18 civil cases together in which a question raised whether English would hold its field in the subordinate judiciary of the country after introduction of Act 2 of 1987 (Introduction of Bengali language) on March 8, 1987.

The judgment on behalf of the Court was delivered by Mr. Justice A.R.M. Amirul Islam Chowdhury.

A Rule was issued on July 7, 1987 by a single Bench comprising Mr. Justice Mustafa Kamal (as His Lordship then was) as to why the impugned order passed by Mrs. Fatema Najib, Munsif, Additional Court, Dhaka, in a lawsuit rejecting the written objection in English should not be set aside. A notice was also issued to the Attorney General of Bangladesh. Subsequently, the matter was placed before the Chief Justice for constituting a larger Bench as it involved interpretation of the Constitution of the Republic.

The Rule was obtained by Mr. Md. Hashmat Ullah on the plea that his written objection in English was not accepted by the Munsif's Court on the ground of debarring clause in Act 2 of 1987.

Mr. T.H. Khan, senior counsel appeared with Mr. M.I. Farooqui and Mr. M. Saleem Ullah for Mr. Hashmat Ullah. He contended, inter alia, that the legislature had not debarred English from the Subordinate judiciary. The Court made the rule absolute.

Dr. M. Zahir with Mr. Firoz Shah appeared for opposite parties in three other Civil Revision Cases supporting the view of Mr. T.H. Khan.

It may be stated that 17 other Civil Revisions were filed by others being aggrieved against the acceptance of pleadings in English in Chittagong District Courts. The Rules in those cases were discharged. [passage omitted]

Proposals on Islamic Common Market Adopted

92AS0468A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 1 Dec 91 p 10

[Text] Bangladesh proposals on the formation of an Islamic Common Market and the Islamic Textile Union were unanimously accepted in principle, at the 18th Executive Committee meeting of the Islamic Chamber of

Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange held in Karachi on November 28, according to the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) in Dhaka on Saturday, reports BSS.

FBCCI President and the immediate past Chairman of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association attended the Islamic Chambers' Executive Committee meeting from the Bangladesh side.

In an approach towards setting up of an Islamic common market, the Islamic Chamber recommended to forward to the General Secretariat of OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference], the proposal of 20 percent reduction in custom duties by all Islamic countries as preliminary step towards the creation of the market. It will also approach the OIC General Secretariat for inclusion, if time permits, of the proposal of an Islamic common market in the agenda of the sixth Islamic summit scheduled to be held in Dhaka from December 5, the FBCCI said.

The Executive Committee also urged the attending member-countries to approach their respective governments to support the proposals of setting up of an Islamic Common Market and reduction of custom tariffs.

On the question of formation of an Islamic Textile Association (ITA), the Executive Committee of the Islamic Chamber resolved that the national textile associations of member states be requested for their comments on the draft constitution to be submitted by Bangladesh by February 22 next.

A meeting of the committee on it will be held in Dhaka subsequently to finalise the draft for submission to the next meeting of Executive Committee scheduled in April next in UAE [United Arab Emirates]; it will be then presented at the General Assembly of the Islamic Chamber in Tehran in October, 1992, for finalisation, the FBCCI said, mentioning that the proposal towards an Islamic common market was first mooted by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman at the Third Islamic summit in Taif in 1981.

INDIA

Editorial Urges Full Relations With Israel

92AS0332A Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 27 Nov 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Why So Much Hesitation?"]

[Text] The Government of India is informing the world proudly that a new breeze has started blowing in the nation's economic thinking and policy. The old economic policy has been truly discarded. According to some type of people, this kind of declaration becomes louder and gets more momentum when high-ranking officials of the organizations like the World Bank are nearby. Although the entire economic policy of the Nehru era has not been completely discarded, it must be

admitted that, in fact, attempts are being made to bring some appropriate changes to it and some of the dirt and dust of the old era has been cleaned. Unfortunately, that kind of new approach is not seen in the foreign policy sphere of the nation. This policy is so infallible that it cannot be changed; this policy is so pure and sacred that it cannot be contaminated by the touch of any fresh breeze. There is no doubt about the fact that our foreign policy, adopted by Nehru, received praise for a long time from different corners and fulfilled the interest and need of the newly independent India. But the first prime minister of India passed away 27 years ago. In the different fields of foreign affairs, the policy of his government was formulated in 1947. Those who want to consider and maintain that policy approach as a fixed one, are creating nothing but an immobile institution. They are afraid of and hesitant to face reality. But the flow of events like time waits for no one.

All of these discussions arose because of the recent comment of Eduardo Faleiro, the minister of state for foreign affairs, about India's relationship with Israel. He said that unless relations between Israel and Palestinians are normalized, India's relation with Israel cannot be strengthened. This remark is highly objectionable. In spite of all the sympathies and respect that India has for the PLO and the PLO leader Yasser 'Arafat, the problems of homeless Palestinians and those of India cannot be the same. Our interests are also different. The way 'Arafat turned and glamorized the violent struggle of an extremist group into a massive movement is undoubtedly praiseworthy. 'Arafat is known throughout the world as a friend of India. But because his relationship with Israel is strained, does that mean that India should not try to strengthen her own relationship with Israel? Since the Arab nations are not willing to recognize Israel, does it mean that New Delhi should also avoid coming closer to Tel Aviv? Can it be the policy of an independent, sovereign and progressive nation?

While our foreign affairs ministry was saying this kind of thing, the Madrid conference was held with grandeur under American initiative and guidance. In spite of refusing initially, the prime minister of Israel attended the conference and held discussions with the equally resentful representatives of the Arab nations. In spite of their apparent animosity outside, they tried to resolve their problems inside. This is real diplomacy in the proper sense of the term. Yasser 'Arafat and the PLO representatives were not present at the conference just to make Israel happy. But it is well-known to all and even to the adamant Israeli prime minister that in spite of being physically absent, the profound influence of 'Arafat was present. All Palestinian representatives are more or less 'Arafat supporters. However, the conference was held and the second stage of the conference is going to be held soon. The Palestinian problem is, no doubt, an extremely complicated matter. It is not possible to find an easy solution to the problem. But doesn't India notice that the wheels started to roll after remaining stalled for over 40 years? Today or tomorrow, a relationship will be established between Israel and its neighboring countries and

nobody can stop that from happening. The Palestinian problem will be resolved within a few years if not in the next year. Will India remain silent until that time? The Soviet Union eased and established friendly relations with Israel so quickly. What stops India from doing so? How long will India wait, closing her eyes to this process of rapid change in the political climate of the Middle East?

Severe Challenges Said Facing Rao Government

92AS0331A Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 20 Nov 91 p 4

[Article by Shivdas Banerjee: "Narasimha Rao Has Met With Some Successes But the Problems Facing Him Are Many"]

[Text] Like the nation's politics, the political parties of the country are passing through an unstable and restless state. The powerbrokers have realized that the people of the country are eager for political stability. All three major political powers are busy with their internal problems. The power struggle within Congress is not resolved, although Narasimha Rao has placed himself in a front-runner position. The result of the internal organizational election, which is going to take place at the end of this year, might go in Rao's favor. The traditionalists within the party are delighted with a feeling of revival. It is difficult to say how the progressives, who were loyal to Rajib, would cope with the new situation. Rao has to find a unanimous candidate for the next presidential position. But he has at least six months to do so.

It seems that BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has adopted a go-it-alone policy to retain its image as the only alternative to Congress. What the party has to do in the near future is to resolve the question of the temple. The leaders of the party realize that their aggressive stance toward Hinduism is giving birth to various opposition groups. They are also realizing that it is necessary to control the activities of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang party. In this context, the responsibility of RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh] has become more complicated. One one hand, it has got to increase the acceptability of BJP in national politics, and on the other hand, it cannot dump the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang party. But there should be no confusion about one thing—if the BJP suppresses the issue of the temple for the time being for political and strategical reasons, it will revive the issue at an advantageous moment in the future. In all probability, it may be done during the time of the next general election.

The condition of the Janata National Front Party is quite poor. In fact, the Rashtriya Morcha [National Front] no longer really exists. The image of the Janata Party has been severely damaged due to internal factional conflict. In the party, only V.P. Singh enjoys some popular support and has the capability to organize the masses. But he does not have the infrastructure to organize and to use this popular support in his favor. Prime Minister

Rao, after announcing his new policy on reservations (by caste group), has been able to take out a substantial amount of wind of V.P. Singh sails. While V.P. Singh is trying to consolidate support within the minority, Rajputs and backward communities, Ajit Singh, the other leader of the party, is trying to regain influence within the Jat [farming caste] community. It is not known yet whether Ajit would join the Congress party. But if he does, he will lose the support of the Jats. The other important leaders like Lallu Yadav of Bihar and Biju Patnaik of Orissa are trying to survive in their own ways. It is doubtful whether Mr. Bommai, the president of the party, would agree to identify himself with V.P. Singh at present.

The two leftist parties, CPI and CPM [Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India-Marxist], are busy with their party congresses. Under normal circumstances, there should not be any problem in the preparatory stage of the party congress. But the dramatic events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe raised some serious questions about fundamental ideology and political issues and it is very important to place a satisfactory explanation about those issues to the supporters, members, and the workers of the party. If it is not done in a convincing way, there might be breakage in the lower level of the party that would result in the loss of the present status enjoyed by the leftist parties in national politics.

All of these surrounding circumstances put the minority government of Narasimha Rao in a favorable position. Without much fanfare, he is confronting the problems systematically and smoothly. His policy of unanimity and his favorable view on good center-state relations provided him with some additional advantages. He silently snatched the economic program of BJP. But it appears that his government is still in a dilemma on the temple issue. Furthermore, his capability of collecting election votes is yet to be tested.

It was heard that the Congress Parliamentary Board was ready to postpone the by-election in the Amethi constituency (Rajib's constituency), according to the plan of the Rajib loyalists. But the prime minister and his associates were eager to get out from under the domination of the Nehru family. This change of attitude would not be a smooth one in the powerful coterie of the party. Leaders like K.K. Tiwari and Sitaram Kesri openly expressed their dissatisfaction. The struggle between Jagannath Misra and Sitaram Kesri to establish supremacy over the Bihar state Congress party is in full gear. In spite of the warning from the prime minister, the factional conflict in the Karnataka state Congress party is in full force. These kinds of things happen in the absence of a strong, powerful, and dominating party high command. It is also the hope of the BJP that Congress will finally break apart to the internal factional conflict.

Sonia Gandhi's decision to not enter politics was one major factor behind the growing weakness of the anti-Congress attitude. Gradually, all the centrist leaders and

groups will start to reevaluate their relations with Congress, and if that really happens, Congress will emerge as a more powerful party.

It does not appear that Congress will interfere in the process of social evaluation at the state level. Rather, it would try to pay close attention to handling the results of the loans received from the IMF in the socio-economic fields and to stabilize the economy of the country. If the economic programs of Manmohan Singh can really inject new power in the market and vitalize the spirit of individual efforts, then the question of improving the standard of living of the majority of the people would get preference. It is known that the IMF did not impose any conditions, the fulfillment of which might result in laying off excess manpower. But it is difficult to accept this notion. And in this perspective, the relevance of the Janata party and V.P. Singh will remain important.

It is a question of whether V.P. Singh would be able to keep the other leaders with him. The question is whether he would be able to keep the issues of social justice and equality alive. Until now, by giving emphasis to these issues, V.P. Singh is doing well for the Congress in one sense. Congress is forced to think about the demands, hopes, and aspirations of the majority of the people. It goes to V.P. Singh's credit that the weaker section of society still does not consider itself detached from the state.

Besides facing the challenge of the BJP, Narasimha Rao can take the comments of V.P. Singh and the leftists to another level—to stop those people from coming to power who take the oath in the name of 10 Janpath [minister's residence]. In spite of the opposition of the middle class, V.P. Singh is still a leader of the common people. He can still force Congress to identify itself with the majority of the population.

If the new economic policy can reach its natural end, the state will retreat from the power and desire to interfere in the social life of the people. As a result, the importance of remaining as a ruling party would also decrease. Maybe the present leadership is thinking that social and political problems could be put under control if no serious mistake is committed. But the thorny problem like Ayodhya might emerge in the nation in an extremely dangerous shape at any moment. So, it would not be wise to remain self-satisfied about this matter.

Performance of Foreign Minister Solanki Criticized

92AS0332B *Calcutta AAJKAAL in Bengali*
21 Nov 91 p 4

[Article by Tabhalin Singh: "Will Solanki Remain on the Throne?"]

[Text] I planned to write it from Colombo. But that did not happen. Because, ultimately, the summit conference of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] was not held. Is it possible to hold any conference of SAARC without India? Natwar Singh, our

former foreign minister, rightly said that India can exist without SAARC, but other SAARC countries realize the truth is that SAARC cannot exist without India. He also explained the reasons for this thesis. India contributes 40 percent of SAARC's total funds. Moreover, if the total population of the remaining six countries is multiplied by two, that still does not come close to the population of India. On the other hand, in spite of all the criticism against Indian foreign policy that exists in New Delhi political circles, nobody agrees with the reasons put forward by Sri Lanka that blamed India for the cancellation of the SAARC summit conference to be held at Colombo. The foreign ministry of Sri Lanka stated that the SAARC conference at Colombo could not take place due to the "adamant attitude" of the Indian prime minister. India did not want the conference held because the King of Bhutan was unable to attend the conference. SAARC's regulations state that in the absence of any head of state of the seven member countries, the SAARC summit conference cannot be held.

Whoever might be responsible for this, whether P.V. Narasimha Rao or President Premadasa Ranasinghe, the net result was that SAARC members quarreled seriously among themselves. Taking advantage of India's absence, the Pakistani prime minister raised the question of Kashmir at Colombo, and, thereby, increased bitterness with India. It was observed that while the countries of the rest of the world are trying hard to resolve their mutual problems, the countries of South Asia are swimming against the current.

Natwar Singh is now an unemployed politician. He has plenty of time on his hands to search for the causes of this crisis. He wants to view the matter from a historical perspective. He said that thoughts about unity in Europe came after two world wars. It is remarkable what is happening in Yugoslavia. It is unwise to hope that something concrete will happen immediately in South Asia. The problem of a large country is that its neighboring countries always suffer from a fear that whether it behaves in an "elder brotherly" or in a dominating manner. According to him, the problem here is a more complicated one. For example, after the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the whole subcontinent had to live with it. In fact, Pakistan raised the Kashmir problem in its meetings with different Islamic states, but nothing happened. Even Pakistan was not successful in gaining anything regarding the matter after building a vast army (in comparison to the area to the country) and beginning a nuclear program. Natwar Singh said that when he was the Indian ambassador to Pakistan, they used to tell him that his sight was as sharp as a hawk's. He used to answer, "We did not open a sanctuary for birds. We have a definite foreign policy and we try to go with it."

Natwar Singh harshly criticized all the faults and the wrongs in Indian foreign policy. He said that the nine-hour-long speech of Krishna Menon in the UN Security Council was responsible for making the Kashmir issue an international one. According to him, it is necessary to restrain the immediate reaction of our foreign affairs

ministry. For example, India should have kept quiet about the statement delivered by Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif at Colombo. Because Nawaz Sharif did not say anything new about Kashmir. All of these things had been said many times before. Similarly, Natwar Singh does not find any logic for India's angry reaction if Kashmir is shown outside the boundary of India on any foreign map. At the outset, this kind of remark may not appear to be as self-criticism, but in the context of India's foreign policy, it is really so. The foreign policy of India appeared to be totally inflexible and inviolable. Nothing could be said against the decision taken at South Block. During the past few months, the situation has changed dramatically. The danger happened at the time of the coup in the Soviet Union. The incident occurred almost at the same time P.V. Narasimha Rao took office. There was no one in the cabinet who had experience in the foreign ministry except P.V. himself. Naturally, the whole matter was handled by the bureaucrats. The result was total devastation. First, our ambassador to Moscow was asleep. One week before the coup, one senior minister returned from a visit to Moscow. He had some hints. He did not feel everything was all right in Moscow. Because whoever he talked to in Moscow advised him not to attach much importance to Gorbachev. When our embassy in Moscow was contacted to evaluate the importance of those hints, it reported back that there was nothing to fear and everything was all right. When the coup occurred, naturally the whole foreign ministry was bewildered. And then that serious mistake took place. Everyone thought that the Gorbachev era was ended. From this misconception, India joined that small group of unimportant countries that supported the coup. Even after that, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao did not even make a telephone call either to Gorbachev or to Yeltsin. And when attempts were made to get them on the telephone, neither was available. This is, naturally, not a good example for the Indo-Soviet "special relationship."

While our foreign policy was confronted with so many problems, a more serious problem came with the appointment of the foreign minister. He does not have basic knowledge about world affairs. People are saying that even after Madhavsinh Solanki started to seriously work as a foreign minister, no sign that his work has been effective has yet been noticed. But it is true that Solanki is now on an almost permanent foreign tour. It would not be a surprise if he loses his post in the reshuffle of the cabinet after the coming by-election.

CPM Said Facing Organizational Change

92AS0331B Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 21 Nov 91 pp 1, 6

[Article: "CPM Is Overhauling the Party Except Its Name"]

[Text] The CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] is going to thoroughly reorganize its political strategy, programs, activities, and basic structural organization.

The Central Committee of the party feels it necessary to change its political strategy on the basis of the changed domestic political state of the country. They want a reorganization of the political program and organizational structure because of events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The question of changing political strategy was indirectly referred to in the proposed draft political resolution of the Central Committee of the CPM. The unanimously accepted political resolution of the Central Committee had already been released and, at present, is under consideration at different levels of the party in different states. The gist of this resolution is that, in view of the current situation of the country, all democratic and secular powers should unite to face the national problems of the country. Attempts should be made to solidify relationships between the leftist parties and the Rashtriya Morcha, in general, and Janata party in particular, although the crisis within the Janata party has become severe. And this should be made on the basis of the unanimous political program upon which all parties called for a general mass rally, which took place in New Delhi on 27 September. At the end of December, some changes would be made to that portion of the resolution in the meeting of the Central Committee. After that, it would be placed before the party congress scheduled to be held in January 1992.

On the question of organizational changes, the leadership of the party has not yet made a decision, and, therefore, no draft resolution has been written. This has to be done before the next meeting of the Central Committee. And that resolution would also be placed in the party congress. Until then, this resolution would not be released, unlike that of the political resolution. On the point of ideological principle, all of the proposals like the draft, political, and politico-organizational resolutions must be passed in the party congress. The meeting of the present party congress would continue for seven days; usually meetings are held for four days.

The question of the change of strategy appeared to the party as a very important issue mainly for three reasons. First, since Sonia Gandhi decided not to contest for a seat in the Parliament, the anti-Congress attitude in the whole country lost considerable strength. The attitude of the so-called centrist political parties toward Congress is changing rapidly. Second, the very existence of the Rashtriya Morcha is at stake. The internal and factional conflict within the Janata party is increasing daily. As a result, the strength of the party is decreasing and its image is badly damaged. It is difficult to say what ultimately will remain as the Janata party. Third, the leaders of the party realized that the CPM is damaging its own interests by tying itself to the rear of other parties at the national level and, of course, in some other states. By following this policy, the CPM increased its strength in national politics and gained considerable power and support in the states such as Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. But this growing strength is not reflected in election results. Due to this reason, the leadership almost

decided to follow an independent political program along with the other leftist parties and carry out independent movements. They are also considering contesting the election separately. But at the same time, the CPM would also support and get involved in the movements with the other parties on some special issues like, secularism, opposition to imperialism, reshaping of center-state relationship, and the preservation of democracy. And the CPM must keep this door open. The leadership believes that if the CPM can follow this policy, it will be able to increase its strength and support much quicker. But it appears that the CPM might face a disagreement with the CPI [Communist Party of India] on this new approach. In spite of that, it is hoped that the CPM would get support from a larger section of CPI on this matter.

The questions of organizational restructure and overhauling the planning of future activities might appear to be more sensitive in comparison to the former one. On the basis of the events in the Soviet Union, the CPM now accepts the fact that the existing organizational structure and activities cannot be and should not be maintained. The policy of democratic centralization has to be discarded. The leaders at all levels have to be openminded and thus be able to communicate more freely with party cadres and supporters. This has become very essential to the interests of the party. There was a time when the opportunity to establish direct contact between the leaders and the workers was much easier. Many workers were known to the leaders by name and they could talk to them freely. That opportunity and atmosphere no longer exist. This condition is especially applicable to the state of West Bengal where 70 percent of the present members got their membership after 1977. It was not possible for the leaders of different levels to establish personal contact with so many members and supporters. It was not even possible to educate a large section of members on political and organizational structure. At a different level of the party, a kind of bureaucratic mentality developed and factionalism emerged. The leaders of different levels

are considering the question of changes in organizational structure and future activity of the party. Debates and serious thinking are occurring about what kind of change of organizational structure and leadership would enable the CPM to rise above its past weaknesses. One draft resolution about the matter might be placed before the meeting of the Central Committee scheduled to be held in December. But the resolution would not be made public before the meeting of the party congress.

Already the structure at the highest level of the CPM party has changed. All members of the five-member secretariat, which was formed to assist the Politburo in its day-to-day political activities, have been elevated to the status of almost full members of the Politburo. In addition to participating in Politburo discussions, they also get voting rights. Naturally it is believed that the membership of the Politburo would increase. In the Central Committee, which is just below the Politburo, a new level of leadership would be created. The day-to-day organizational activities of the party would be directed by this level of leadership on behalf of the Central Committee. The leaders at this level would be able to make decisions on every matter after consulting with Politburo members. It would also consider whether this kind of model would be introduced at the state, district, or local levels. The highest leadership realized that it would not be possible for E.M.S. Namboodiripad to carry out the responsibilities of the general secretary of the party any longer due to poor health. Most likely Harkishan Singh Surjit is going to replace him. If a new committee is created just below the Politburo, some members of the West Bengal unit of the party might be invited to join it. The Central Committee does not have any doubt about the fact that many unwanted elements have entered the organizational structure of the party in different states. It appeared after talking with many leaders that the Central Committee is determined to cut unnecessary and harmful fat out of the party. It means that after the party congress, a large-scale purification process of the party would be addressed in the CPM.

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